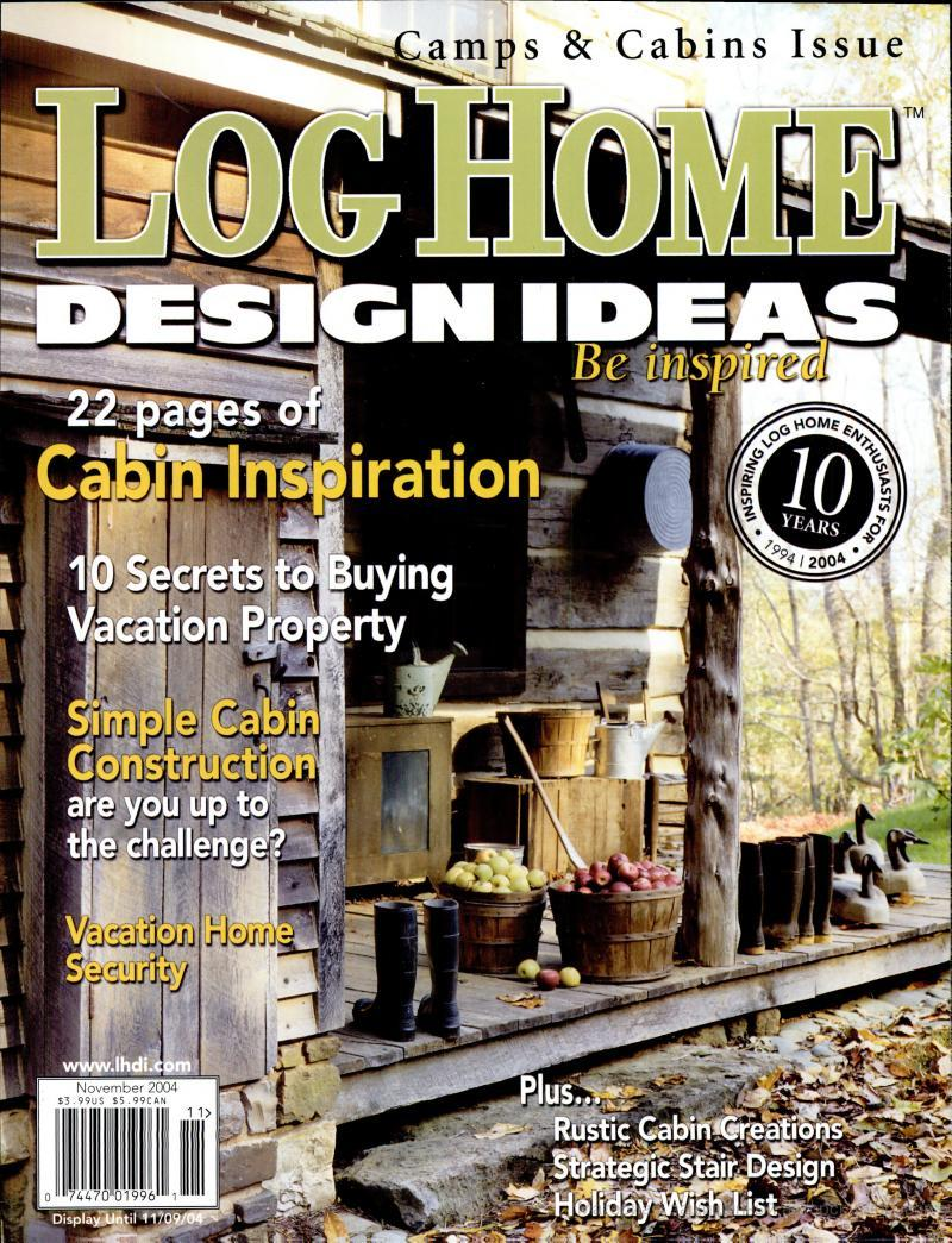
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Lincoln Logs
Plan #246

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Circle Reader Response #326

Golden Eagle LOG

We make it easier for you to buy a log home

Golden Eagle offers many services:

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- We offer professional pre-finishing options on doors, trim, planking and windows.
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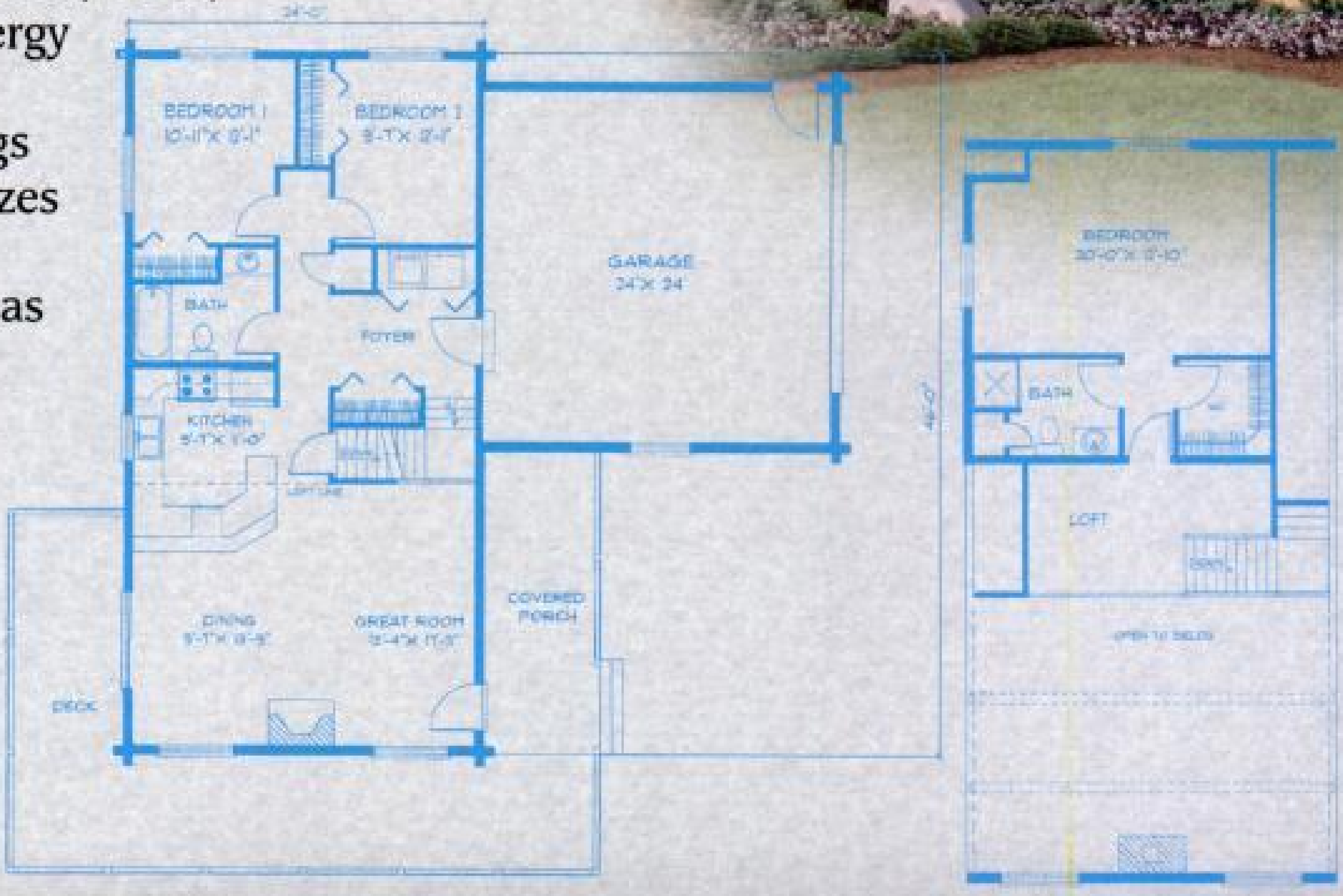
- You can be assured the *"complete package"* from Golden Eagle Log Homes will be engineered to work as a system; floors, roofs, walls, stairways, energy saving insulation, cabinets, door swings and window jamb sizes are all going to fit. Golden Eagle even has a 25-year warranty.
- So if you want to uncomplicate your life, stop in, give us a call, or visit one of our many dealers.



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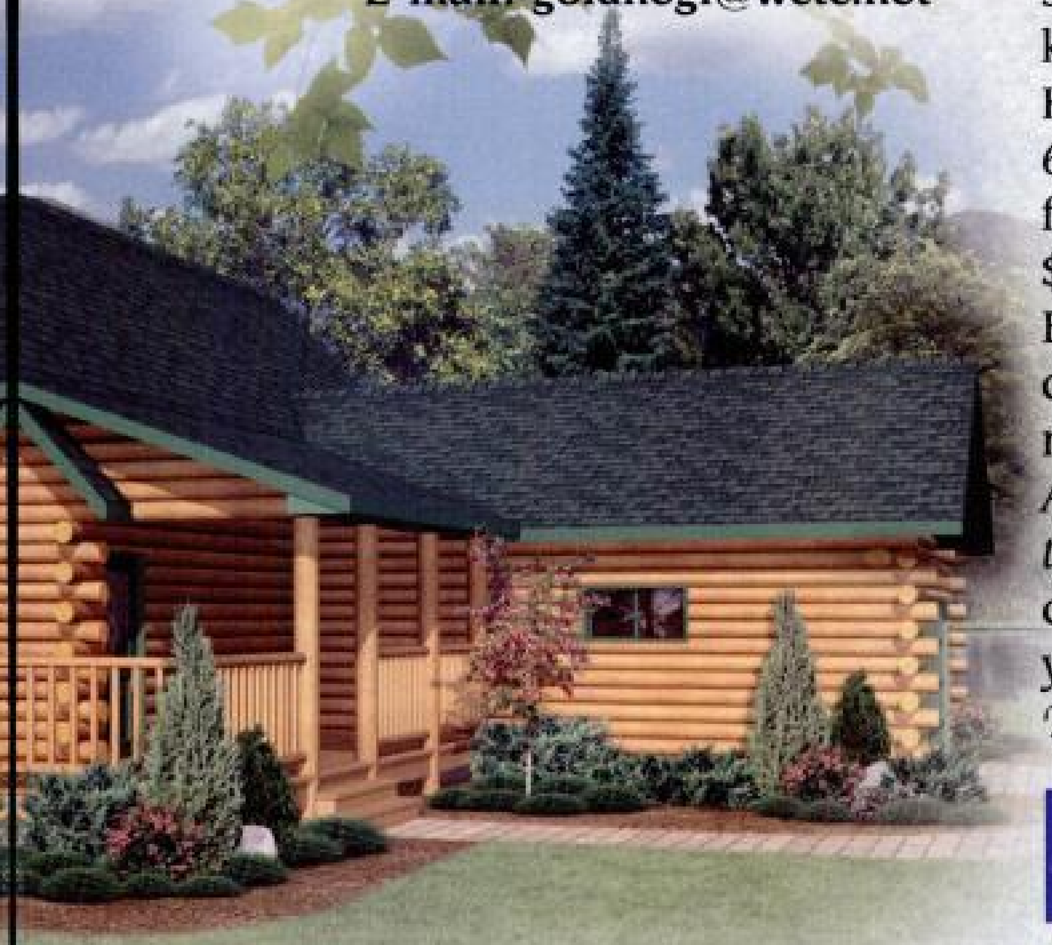

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1,768 Sq. Ft.

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Crestline Windows & Doors

If you're like most people, you're very busy and don't have time to shop for every single component in your new log home. We can help you. *Golden Eagle has the most complete log home package, period.*

Like most log home companies, we have the shell package; however, we also include the kitchen and bath cabinetry, countertops, Heatilator fireplace and stone, trim, prehung 6-panel pine doors, plumbing fixtures, light fixtures, treated deck with peeled log railing, $1,500 stain allowance, Blue Ox screws, Log Builder caulk, knotty pine T&G on all ceilings, closet shelving, overhead garage doors, medicine cabinets, even the kitchen sink. *And yes, we offer choices on all these products too!* All for about the same price as our competitor's shell package. Let us help you build your dream home.
Thank You!

Eagle Point typical completed log home cost.

- Log Home Package–8"x 8" "D" Full Log $94,625
- Tax on Log Home Package, Average $5,678
- Building Permit, Average $1,500
- Dig Basement and Backfill $2,150
- Basement and Flat Work $12,391
- Plumbing Labor $6,276
- Heating, Furnace, A/C; Labor & Materials........$6,944
- Electrical Labor $6,053
- Floor Covering (Carpet, Ceramic, etc.) $6,188
- Carpentry Labor, Complete $47,461
- Interior Wall T&G/Drywall $4,057
- Labor for Fireplace Stone $3,500

***Total Budgeted Cost, Complete........$196,823**

**Cost varies by area. Does not include lot costs.*

Circle Reader Response #93

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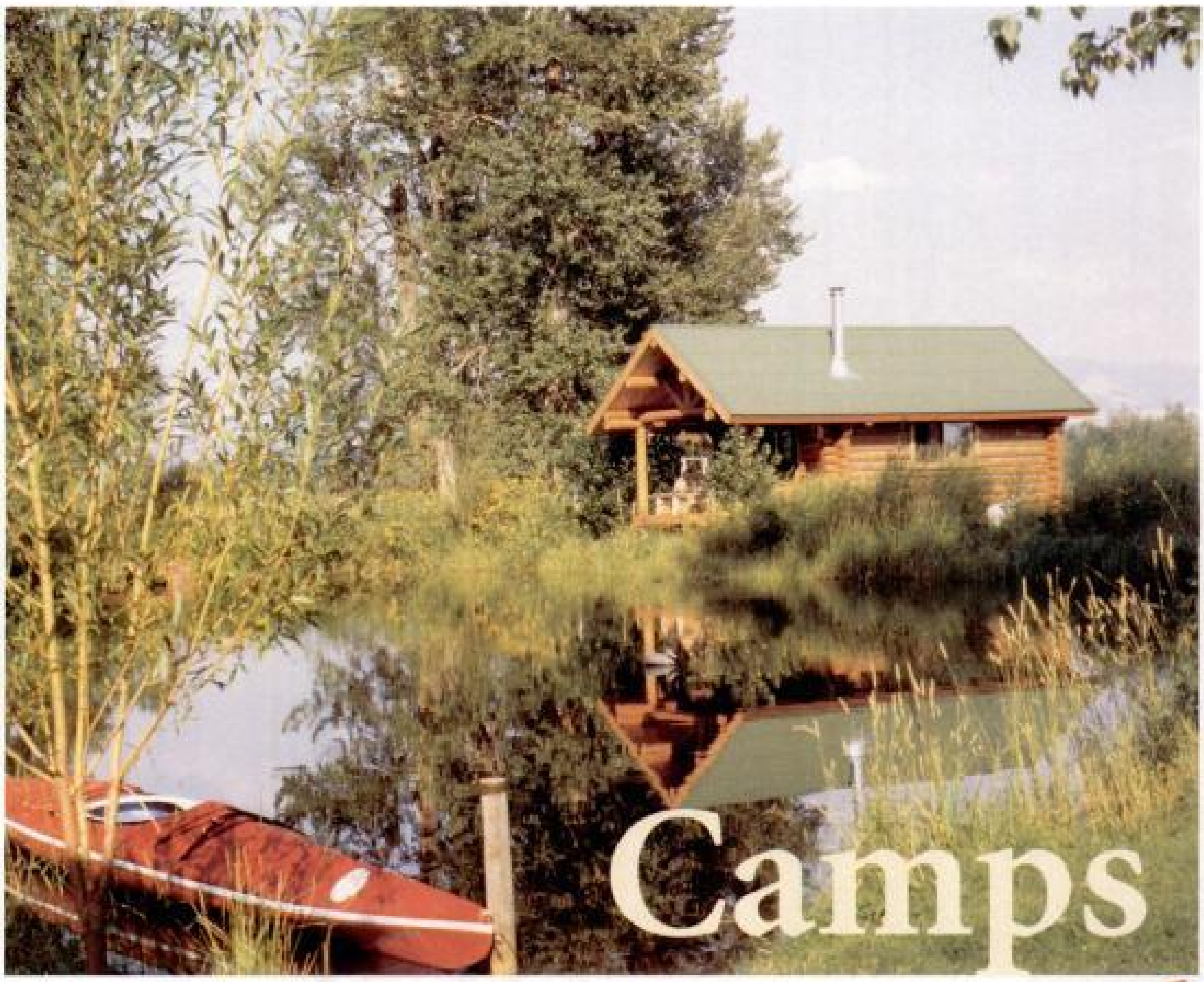
CONTENTS



Camps & Cabins

November 2004

FEATURES

40 Rethinking Rustic
Today's camps and cabins are starting to resemble primary homes. Learn how to give your retreat a modern makeover.

50 Strategic Stair Design
Top designers offer expert advice for properly placing stairs within a floor plan.

HOMETOURS

62 Special Delivery
Discovered by chance, this little log cabin turned out to be a perfect fit for a retired Wisconsin couple.

68 Beacon On A Hill
Perched on a lakeside knoll in Wisconsin's northwoods, an Illinois couple's log retreat sparkles with light.

76 The Great Escape
A second home close to home, this cabin boasts an efficient floor plan that allows its owners to get all they can from their city escape.

Photo Courtesy Cindy Thiede

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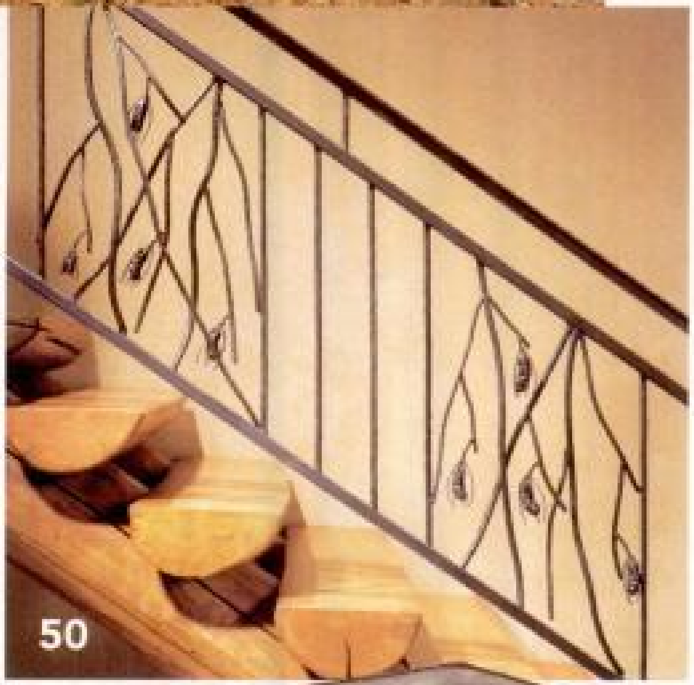


COLUMNS

14 Seen & Heard The latest products designed to make living in your camp or cabin safe and stress-free

18 Q&A Meet Home Security Expert Bo Mitchell

24 Financing 10 Secrets To Buying Vacation Property

30 Builders Corner Simple Cabin Construction

ARTOFTHEHOME

91 Profiles Meet six craftspeople who use natural materials to build some of the finest cabin furniture and accessories available

92 On Tap New furniture and accents for your cabin

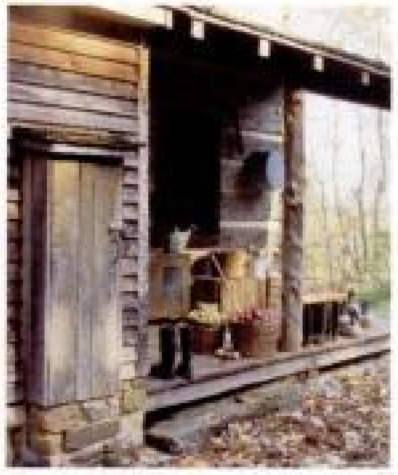
103 Cover To Cover Four new books that are sure to inspire greatness in your cabin design

DEPARTMENTS

10 Editor's Log
16 Bookshelf
106 Calendar
160 Home Fires

READERTOOLS

8 Coming In The Next Issue
113 Floor Plans
128 Ad Index
130 Directory of Dealers, Builders & Suppliers
157 Logging On



ON THE COVER

Photo By Cindy Thiede

22 Pages Of Cabin Inspiration — **62**
10 Secrets To Buying Vacation Property — **24**
Simple Cabin Construction; Are You Up To The Challenge — **30**
Vacation Home Security — **18**
Rustic Cabin Creations — **91**
Strategic Stair Design — **50**
Holiday Wish List — **87**

Photos By Roger Wade/Courtesy Frontier Builders; By Heidi A. Marty; Courtesy Stone 2 Furniture; Courtesy Missouri Division Of Tourism (top to bottom)

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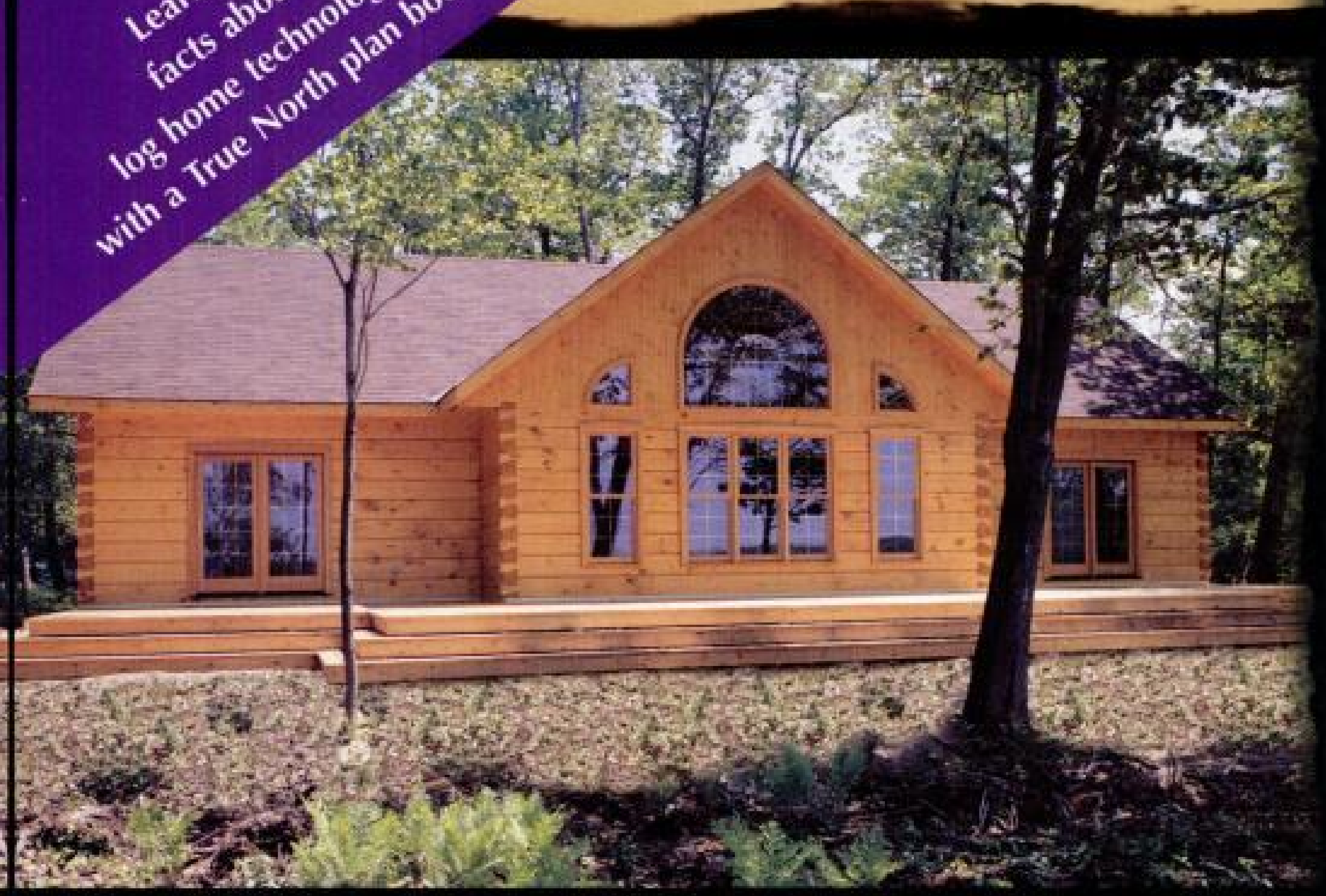
Learn the facts about log home technology with a True North plan book



Lake Muskoka, Ontario

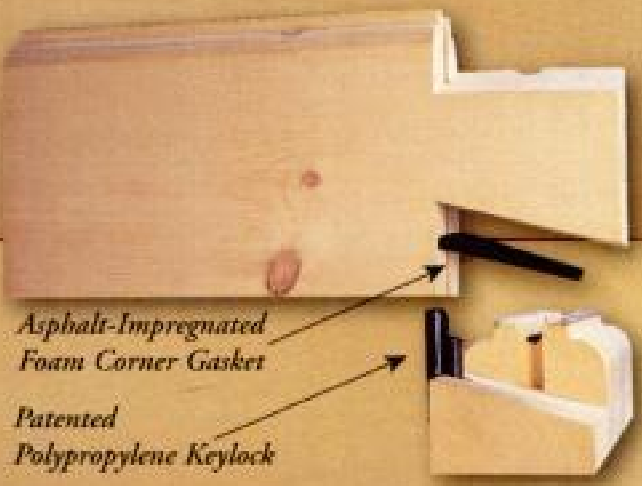
Imagine owning the most technologically advanced log home in the world!

Some say that beauty is only skin deep, but hidden in the walls of every True North Log Home is what sets us apart. Years of relentless research have resulted in an exclusive patented joinery system unsurpassed by any log home maker on earth.

True North's Secret ...

Our technology capitalizes on the fact that all logs will shrink and settle over time. True North uses that natural log shrinkage to its advantage, which ultimately makes our log assemblies tighter. The introduction of strategically-placed patented key locks, butt splines and post locks works with nature to actually tighten the structure over time.

True North's Patented Keylock Air Seal Corner®



When inserted, True North's patented keylock pulls the log interfaces together. Over time, the log shrinks toward the keylock to ensure an airtight seal.

As testimony to our product confidence, we are the only log home manufacturer to offer a "Zero" air infiltration warranty for a full 25 years. This warranty comes with every True North factory-stained log home. Caulking and chinking will never be needed.

With over 100 stunning photographs, our plan book walks you through a step-by-step assembly of our watershed dovetail corner. We also feature our new double round log profile, a post-to-log joining system and our traditional saddlenotch corner. Additionally, we answer in detail many of the commonly asked questions posed by log home enthusiasts.

To order your plan book, or for the location of a construction seminar or True North model home near you, call us today!

Twenty Five Year · Zero Air Infiltration Warranty · 25

Our patents prove it!

Patents;	4,599,837	1,242,558
1,265,024	1,273,468	1,684,448
1,685,584	5,325,645	2,002,665
4,938,263	5,247,389	4,392,520
1,260,655	5,020,289	1,264,644

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coming in december

The holidays are all about anticipation, and here's a sneak peek at what's to come in our December issue:

ALL NEW DESIGN!

We'll unwrap a brand new look and a new format packed with even more practical advice and inspiration for log home enthusiasts.

Let's Dish

Kitchen design secrets from the pros

Big Ideas

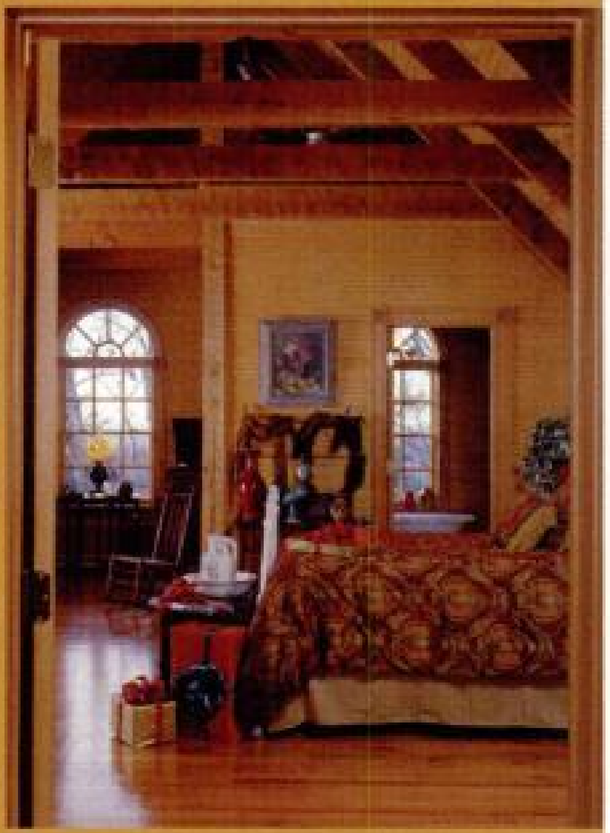
Expert tips for making a large home feel cozy

Deck The Halls

10 pages of gorgeous holiday homes

Big Ideas

Expert tips for making a large home feel cozy



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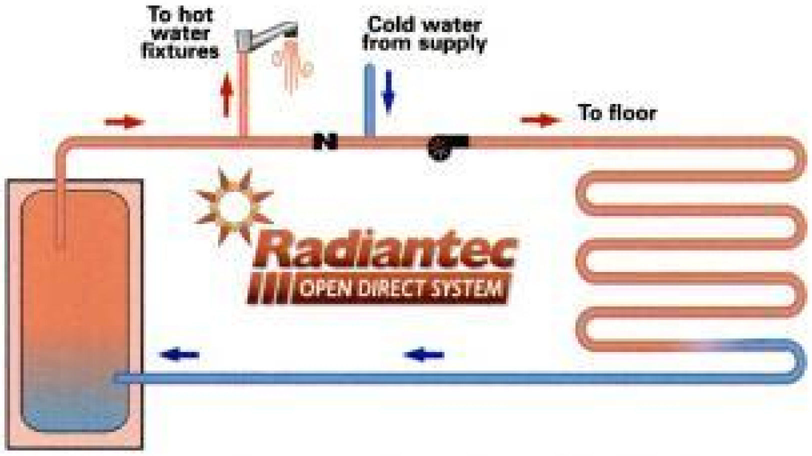

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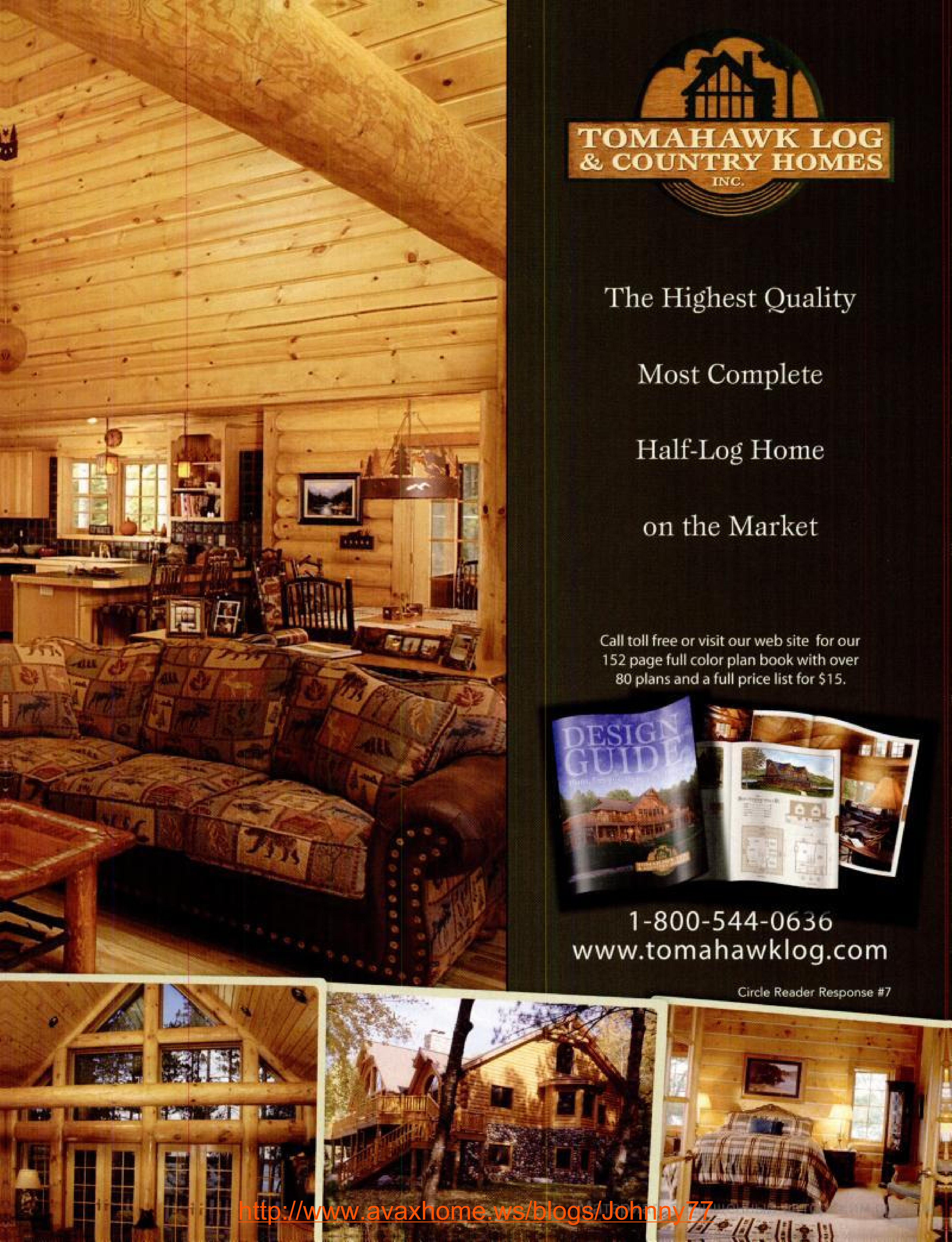

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On The Go

The log cabin is going mobile. Gastineau Log Homes recently introduced its Log Cabins 2 Go mobile housing units. Perfect for a weekend or hunting cabin, LC2GO units come in four different floor plans and feature 400 square feet of living space.

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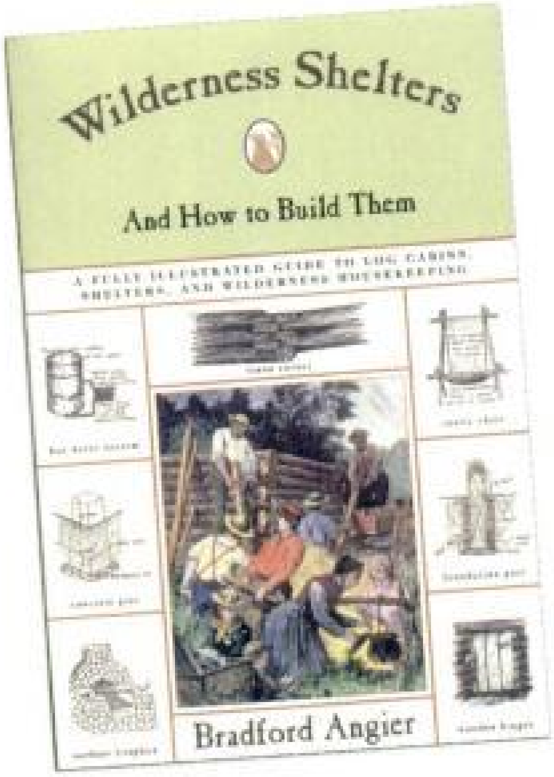

Wilderness Shelters

Bradford Angier • 310 pages
The Lyons Press

The first sentence of *Wilderness Shelters* says it all: "Anyone can build a log cabin."
Learn how from author Bradford Angier, one of America's leading outdoorsmen. Here, he lays out step-by-step the methods for building structures that will last. Everything from laying foundations to insulating roofs to felling trees and shaping logs is described in detail. Angier even shows you how to create rustic indoor and outdoor furniture.

To contact The Lyons Press,
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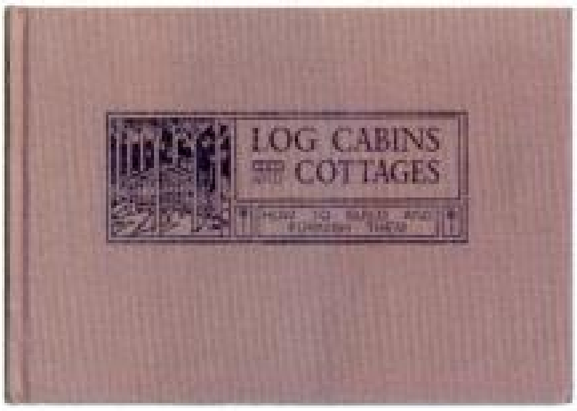

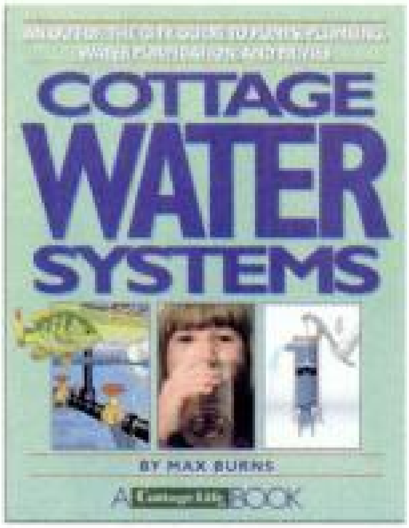

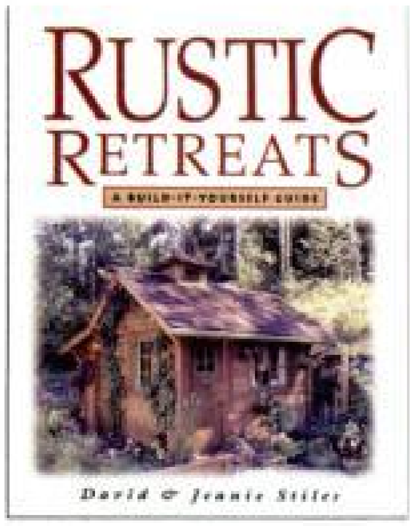

Log Cabins And Cottages

William S. Wicks • 138 pages
Gibbs-Smith, Publisher

In this ever-changing, increasingly complex world, a lot of people are pining for the simple life. William S. Wicks proposes a return to the woods and offers advice on how to do it in *Log Cabins And Cottages*.

In his book, Wicks offers advice on how to build a camp in the wild from materials mostly found in the forest. Topics including choosing a building site, laying foundations, selecting and shaping timber and constructing a roof are covered in great detail. Easy-to-build construction plans are included.

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Cottage Water Systems

Max Burns • 150 pages
Cottage Life Books

The importance of having clean drinking water isn't lost on cottage owners. Author Max Burns presents this guide to water systems to help you get the most out of yours.

In clear, easy-to-understand language, Burns explains how each component of different water systems works and offers dozens of tips on installation and making repairs.

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Rustic Retreats

David & Jeanie Stiles • 153 pages
Storey Publishing

Known as the first couple of do-it-yourself building projects, David and Jeanie Stiles show you just how easy it is to build a great getaway.

Rustic Retreats is full of inexpensive, easy-to-do building projects that can be finished in a relatively short amount of time. Included with each project is a list of essential tools and equipment and a description of the basic building techniques needed to do the job right.

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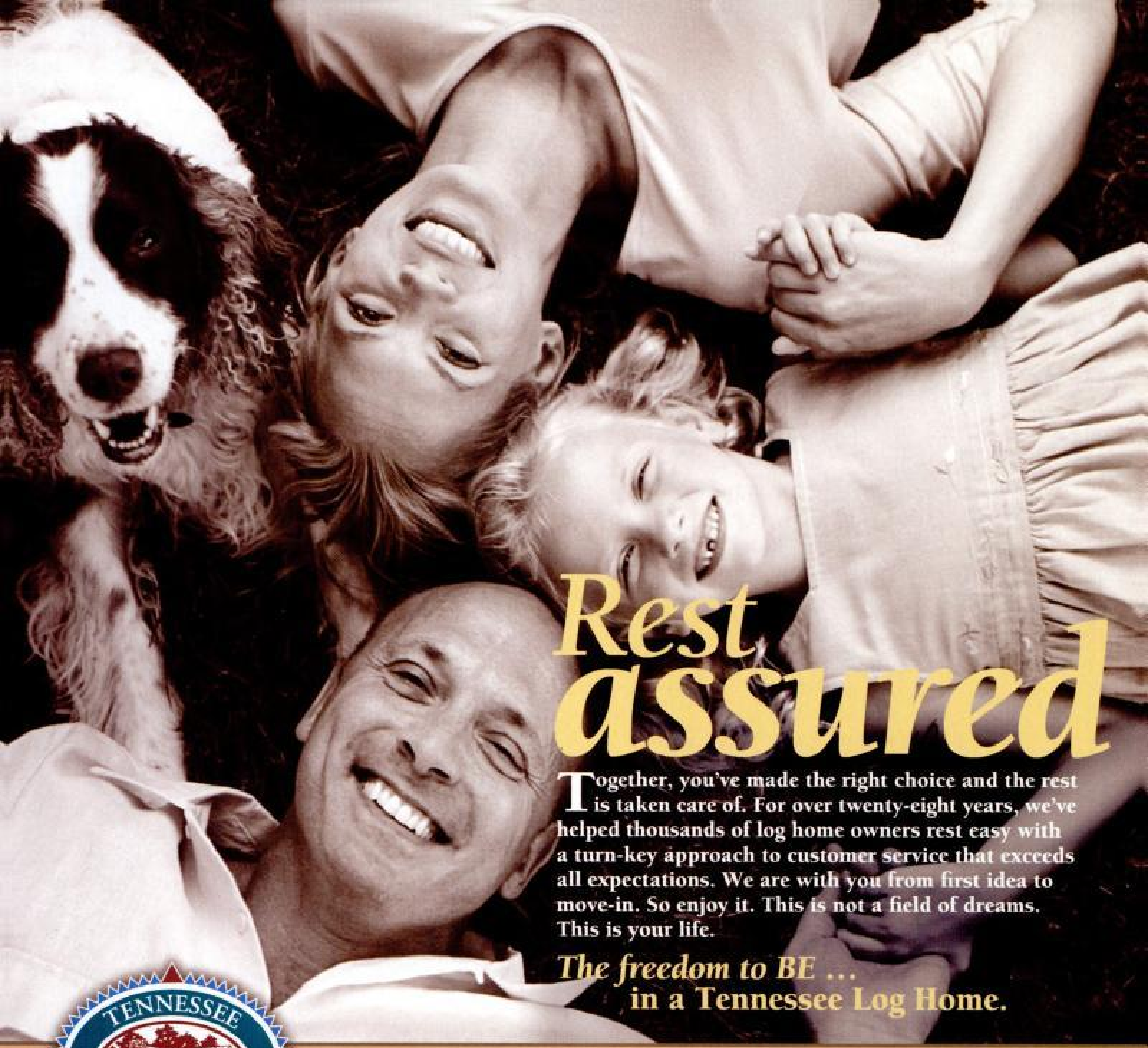

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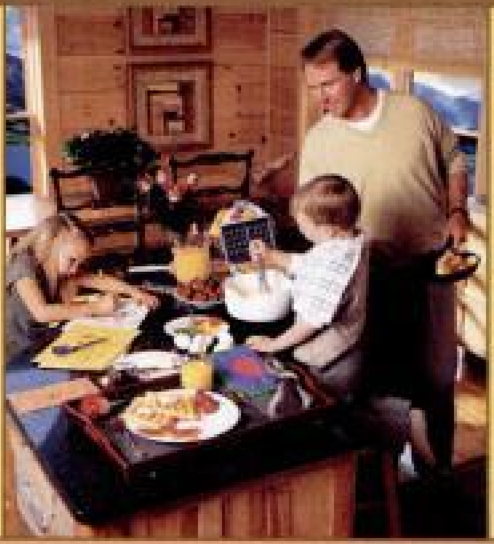

High expectations are the key to everything.

Sam Walton

Circle Reader Response #86

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An Inside Look at Vacation Home Security

Meet Home Security Expert Bo Mitchell

Bo Mitchell knows all about vacation home security. He served as police commissioner of Wilton, Connecticut for 16 years before founding 911 Consulting LLC, a business that assesses the emergency preparedness of organizations and workplaces. Clients include manufacturers, service businesses, schools and property management companies.

A recognized authority on emergency preparedness, Mitchell has been featured in several magazine and newspaper articles on the subject. He is a certified protection professional as recognized by ASIS International, an organization of security management professionals, and he takes part in continuing education programs through various law enforcement organizations.

LHDI: When purchasing a security system for a vacation home or cabin, what are some important factors customers should consider? What can they expect to pay for a security system?

Mitchell: For the majority of houses, a basic system is all that's necessary.

All electronic alarm systems should include a master control panel, one or more keypads for arming and disarming the system, perimeter sensors for doors and windows, motion detectors for areas inside the house, a siren or strobe lights, a yard sign and window decals. The keypad may include panic buttons for police, fire or medical assistance. Systems can be hard-wired or wireless.

To make a basic system better, add exterior dusk and motion detector lights. Position them around your property perimeter so anyone approaching your home is flooded in light. Position sensor lights to flood entrances and vulnerable windows that are visible from the street and to neighbors.

For another level of security, consider a monitored security system. Whether you are in residence or away, your house is monitored 24 hours a day. When trouble strikes, the authorities are notified. However, if your vacation home is in a remote location, it could take up to 60 minutes — or longer — for private security or police to respond. In that time, your home can be emptied.

> "Talk with the police department in your vacation home jurisdiction ... Get to know them before you need them by asking their advice."

You can install a basic security system yourself for around $500. Of course, costs are related to the size of your home and the number of components you need. If you hire a monitoring service, the monthly fee starts at around $30.

Ask around to get recommendations for security systems and contact two to three installation companies. Ask those companies for competitive bids and references. Call their references. Ask if you can see installations in homes in your area.

LHDI: Since people are often away from their vacation homes for long periods of time, what are some security measures they can take, outside of installing a security system, to prevent break-ins?

Mitchell: Never leave a key hidden in a secret place. Use deadbolt locks. Make sure all exterior doors are solid wood or metal.

Talk with the police department in your vacation home jurisdiction. These are the professionals who will respond if something ugly happens. Get to know them before you need them by asking for their advice.

Contact your local police chief or sheriff. Tell them when you'll be in residence and ask for an appointment, preferably at your vacation house. If that isn't possible, go to the station.

When you meet, ask how your neighborhood is patrolled. Don't assume that you know; you don't. Explain how you currently protect your house. Then ask how they protect vacation houses in general, all houses in your neighborhood, and your house specifically.

Ask what more you should be doing. Ask about the crime rate in your neighborhood, if they have procedures

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that permit you to call them when you're not in residence, and what their response time is to your home. Ask if they will periodically drive by.

Install small cameras that let you monitor your property in real time via the Internet. While you probably won't monitor your property around-the-clock, you can periodically check the condition of your retreat from any computer in the world.

Some homeowners post a bogus security system sign, giving the illusion they have a system. Given enough time, your cover will be blown. Word will leak out from a neighbor, property manager, housekeeper or repair person, especially in small communities.

LHDI: What things can you do to make a vacation home look occupied?

Mitchell: First, lights. Interior and exterior lights that turn on and off at random times thwart intruders. It's easier to hit another house that's cloaked in darkness.

Next, sound. Have a TV and radio go on and off at random times in different rooms of the house. Make sure the volume is set so you can hear them from any exterior door. Synchronize the TV and radio to lights turning on and off in the same rooms, with a few seconds delay between light and sound.

Third, hire someone to keep your yard in good condition. Nothing says "Vacant!" like a shaggy, weed-choked lawn or an unplowed driveway.

Of course, cancel any newspaper deliveries. Leave window coverings in a normal position. Keep your phone answering machine or voice mail engaged and check for messages.

LHDI: Is it a good idea to have a resident house-sitter? When choosing one, what should you look for?

Mitchell: A house sitter makes a house look occupied and protects you from intruders. A sitter can also limit damage from a burst water heater, frozen pipes or other system failures.

Yet, there are downsides. A house sitter might neglect your house or even trash it. Your vacation home could become an open party house, a shelter for homeless cats or an unofficial bed and breakfast. A sitter may not deploy your security system or be discrete about the system's workings.

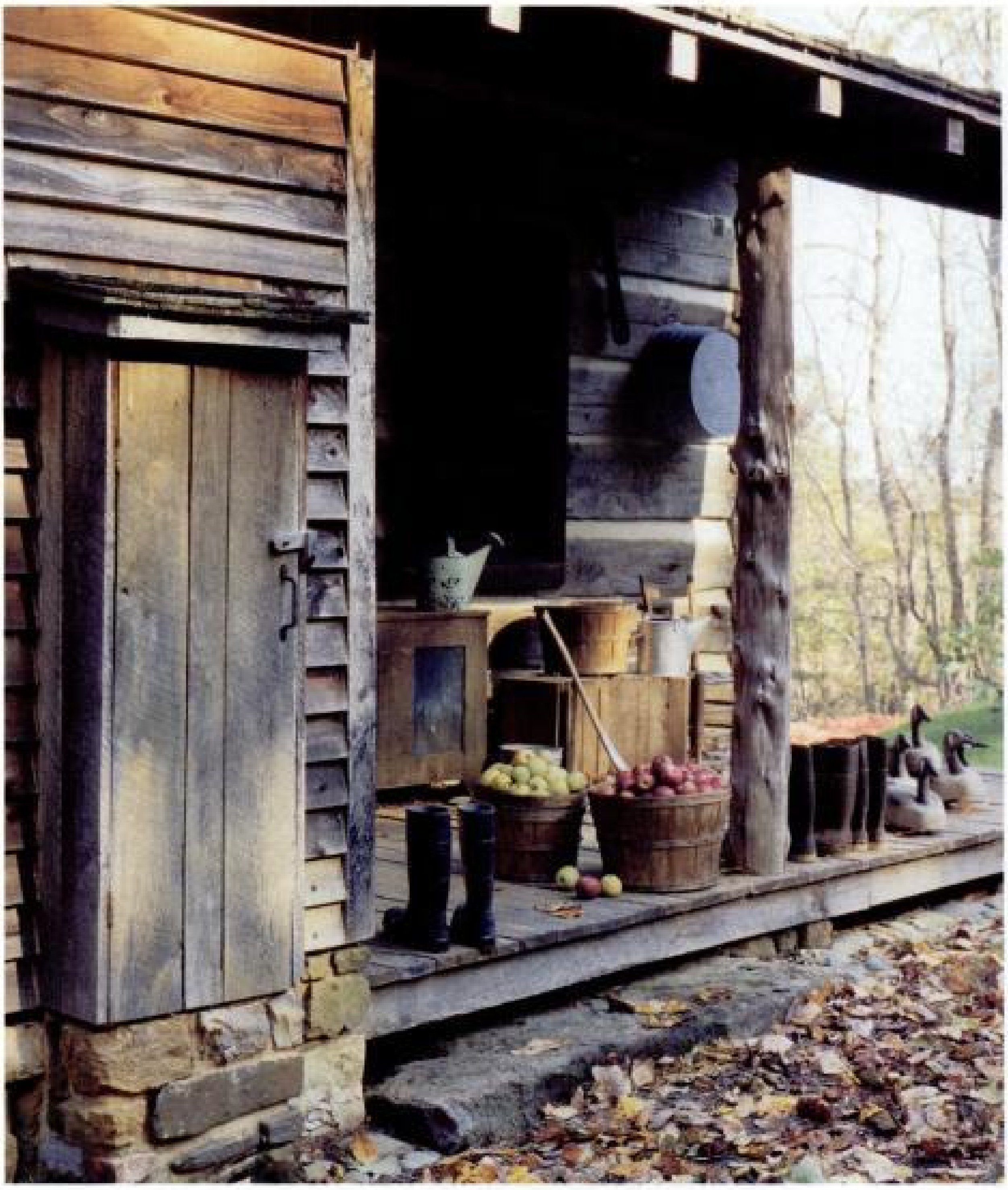

Photo By Cindy Thiede

One of the best ways to deter burglars is to make your vacation home look occupied. You can do so by raking up the leaves and keeping the lawn mowed. Installing a security system that flicks on some lights or the TV at night isn't a bad idea either. A monitored system can also alert emergency units if the place catches fire or there's a gas leak.

If you're leaning toward hiring a sitter, talk with a local real estate attorney first. Ask about any laws applying to house sitting. For instance, if you occupy your home for a brief period once a year, your house sitter might be viewed as a legal tenant, with all of the rights that go with that status.

The best tool for hiring someone is to know the person as well as you can. Our motto: Assume nothing, trust no one.

Ask potential sitters for references, then talk with them. Ask the references about the candidate's strengths and weaknesses, including living habits, dependability and willingness to vacate when you want to use your house. Even when all references are glowing, conduct a background check on potential sitters. Check credit rating, criminal activity and any moving violations while driving.

After you've chosen a sitter, agree on ground rules and policies in writing. Be accommodating to your sitter's requests as much as is reasonable. You want this to be a mutually beneficial relationship.

Inform the local police department of your arrangement, ideally in person. Give them a file folder including the sitter's vital statistics (height, weight, hair and eye color, date of birth, driver license number), a description of your sitter's vehicle and the license plate number. If possible, include a photo of

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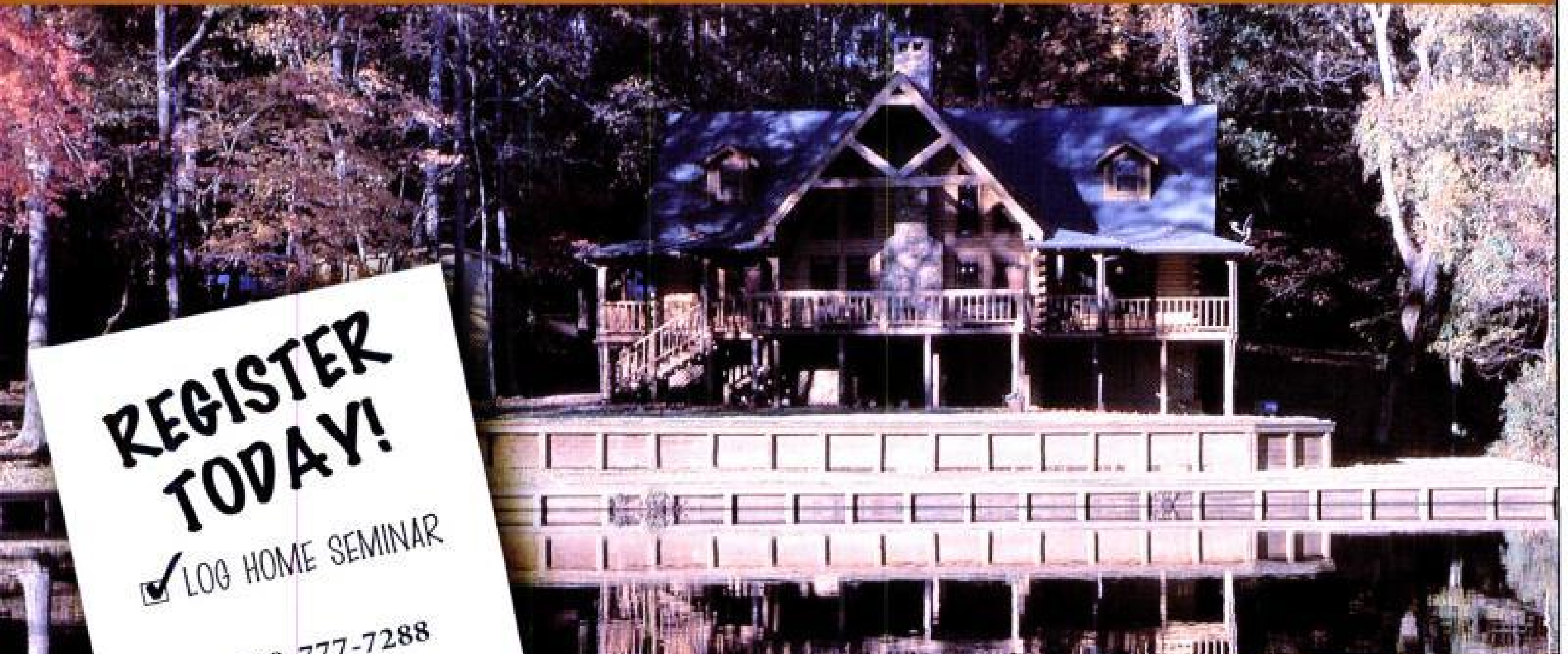

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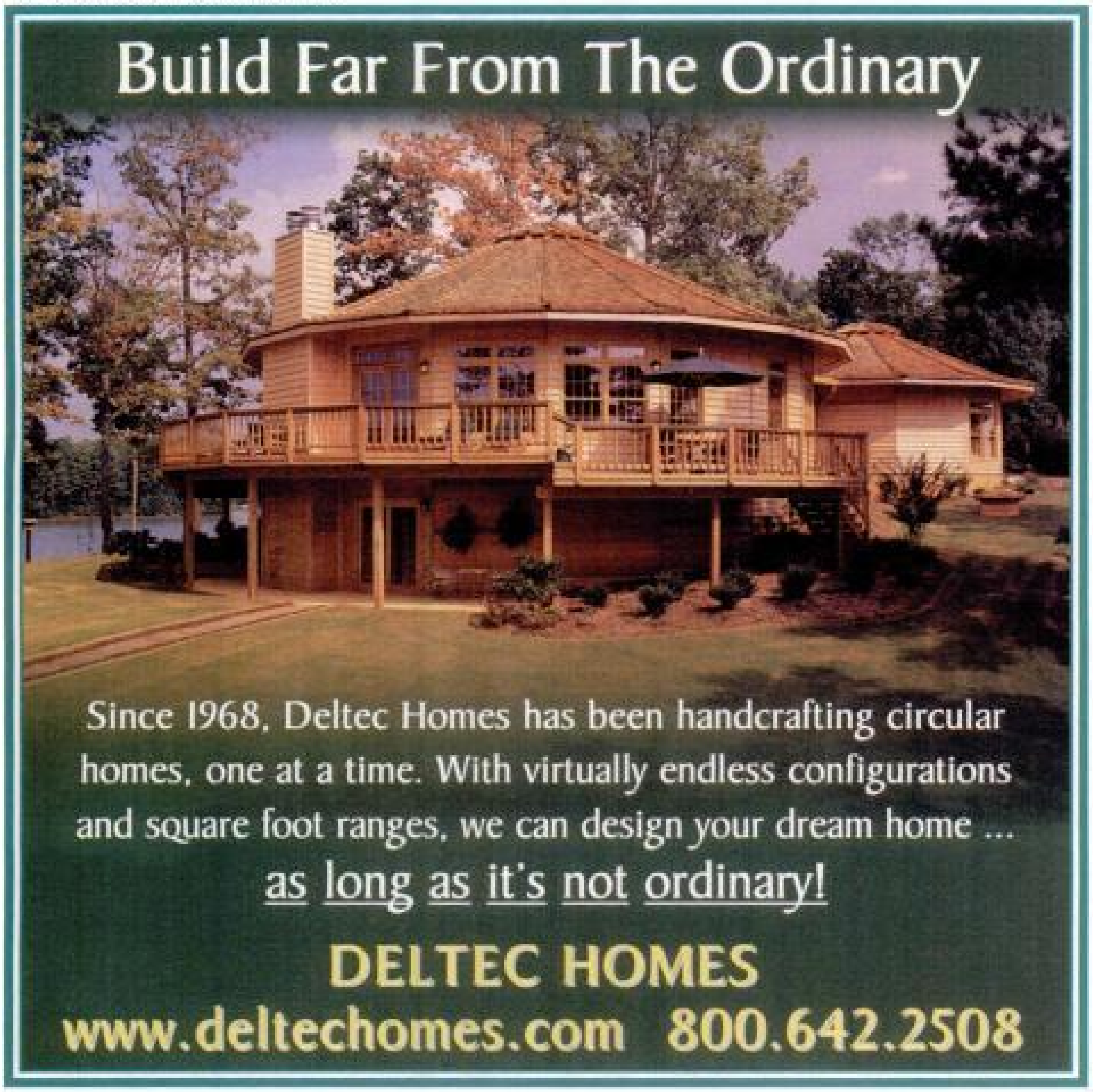

∇ Circle Reader Response #164

your sitter. Finally, include the address of your vacation house, a photo of your house from the street or driveway, and all of your contact information. When you take this seriously, so will the sitter and the police.

LHDI: A lot of people have their neighbors keep an eye on the place while they're gone. What are some things you should tell them before you leave?

Mitchell: Make sure your neighbors are familiar with your house. They should understand your security system. They should know what your security alarm sounds like and what your smoke detectors sound like. They should know what to do if any alarms are triggered.

They should know how to shut off the water, electricity and gas. They should have your contact information, including a back-up contact if you cannot be reached. They should also have the names and phone numbers of any workers so they can call your plumber, electrician or roofer if needed in an emergency.

All instructions, systems and contact information should be in writing and presented in a file folder.

LHDI: What are some security or safety issues people often don't think about with regard to vacation homes?

Mitchell: Envious vacationers and curious strangers. Unless your property is fenced and gated, anyone can stroll into your yard, tread your walkways and inspect your house's exterior.

They'll try to look inside through your windows. Then they'll go back to their hotel or neighborhood and blab about their "find," motivating others to inspect your property.

RESOURCES:

911 Consulting
Mitchell Park
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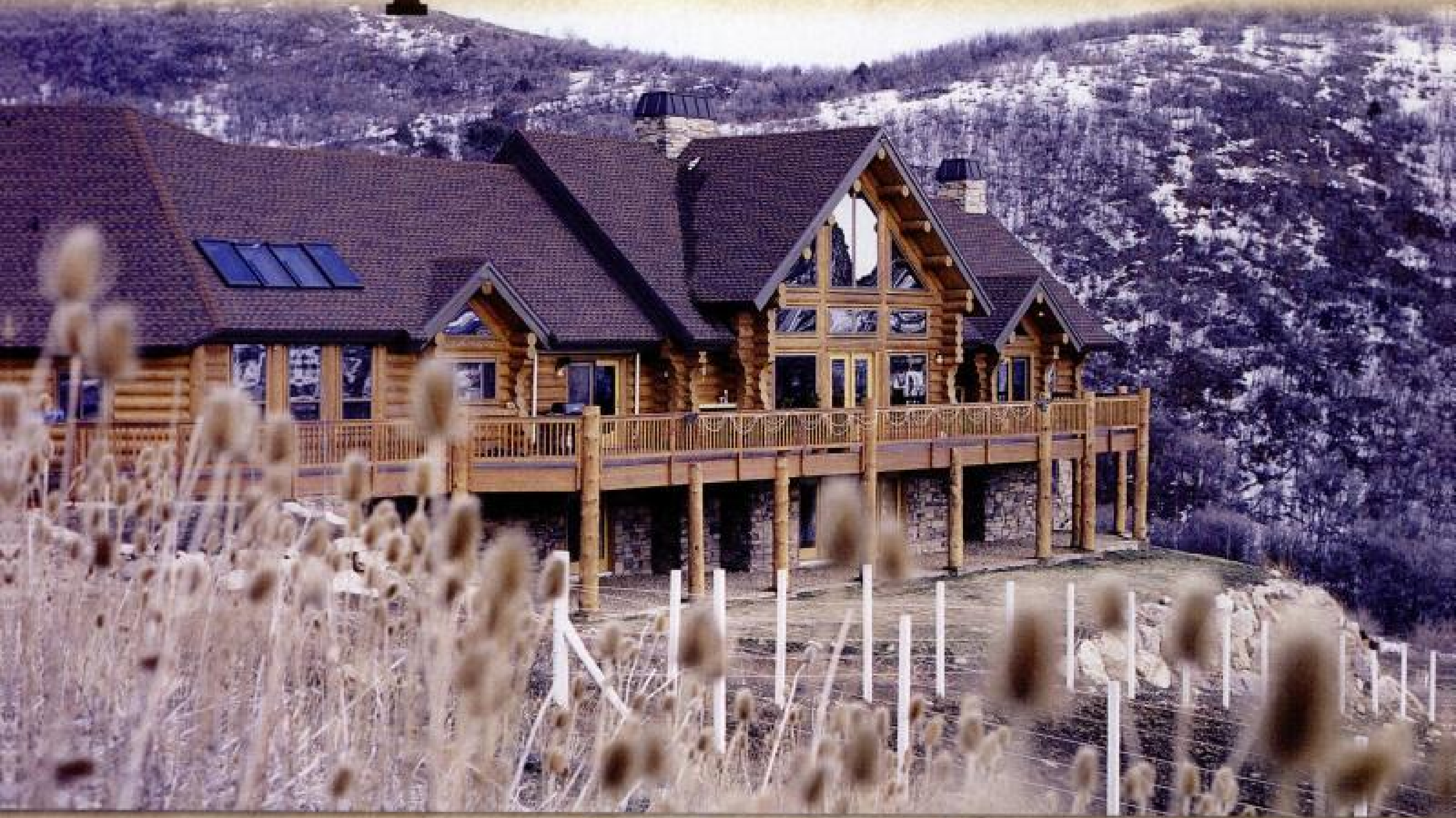

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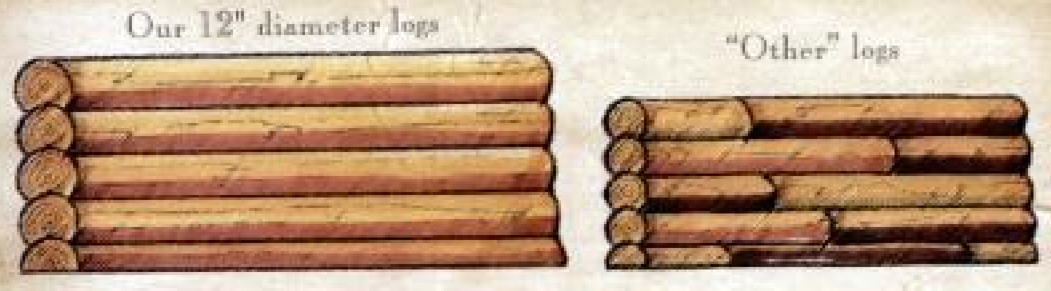

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Log & Country Homes, says the square footage of a vacation home doesn't have to be big. "There is not as much need for huge amounts of [personal] storage. That keeps the square footage down. You may want to build an outbuilding to store seasonal equipment. Screen porches are common in Wisconsin's northwoods. A three-season porch extends the usage of the home and doubles as a storage area for patio furniture."

Understand restrictions before you purchase the property. On lakefront property there are often setback rules. Deducting land 20' from the road, 20' from the lake and 8' from adjacent properties may not leave enough room for your home. Will you be allowed a beach? More and more county and state governments are requiring a natural barrier between lawn and lake. Arm yourself with a list of restrictions before you buy property.

Photo Courtesy Missouri Division of Tourism

If you plan to purchase waterfront property, expect to pay thousands more for a small lot than you would pay off the water for a larger parcel. A less expensive option: if you have a boat that's easy to transport, build on a lot close to a public boat landing.

4. Where can I find property?

Use your vacations to check out the areas you are considering. Pick up Realtor magazines and newsletters to get an idea of prices. Search the Internet to find knowledgeable licensed Realtors. Sit at the counter at local cafes and engage in conversations with the locals. Ask questions and listen politely. Local gossip can tell you a great deal about the community. Les Scher, author of *Finding and Buying Your Place in the Country* says there is no point in having a second home without a view so make sure you mark your map whenever you see scenic wonders.

5. How much will the property cost?

Availability and cost are closely entwined. Pat Moore of Eagle Springs Real Estate is seeing 35-acre lots in southeast Colorado sell from $70,000 to $400,000, depending on view, water and proximity to national forests. There is plenty of land available now, but she is seeing a run on property as baby boomers approach retirement.

Les Scher says the big complaint in California is that there is a lack of available property. "There are lots of buyers, not enough listings," he points out. As a result, land is much more expensive in California. Scher says prices are going up as much as 15 percent annually. But with mortgage rates still low and the price of real estate spiraling upward, the investment is sound.

Land in Wisconsin's northwoods is still reasonable, provided it is not on a lake. If buyers plan on using the property primarily for hunting and snowmobiling and have a boat that is easy to transport to a boat landing, a large wooded lot will do. Those who insist on lakefront property must plan on spending tens of thousands more for a small lot. Don't forget to calculate mortgage and insurance costs before signing off on any piece of property.

6. Will financing be a problem?

Years ago, banks didn't lend on second homes because if the owners got into financial difficulties, they would let their vacation homes go before their primary residence. Scher notes that these days commercial lenders seem more willing to loan on second homes. In Colorado, Moore says "it's a piece of cake. Financing for vacant land requires as little as 15 percent down for anyone with good credit, rates of 6 to 7 percent, and even 30-year mortgages."

7. What other considerations are there?

Check out the property in every season. Never buy property covered with snow. You have no idea what lies beneath it. Land can be cheap when it is in the middle of a mosquito-filled marsh with no amenities.

Scher says driving can be a killer, not to mention the gas costs. "Draw a circle on a map two hours' drive around (your primary residence). That's the area you're looking at. If you can't find anything, make the circle bigger. Try 2½ hours, then 3 hours. After that, it's too much driving." How isolated do you want to be? Family health issues are a consideration. A bee bite can be fatal for some. How close to a hospital do you need to be?

Remember, the farther the land is from civilization, the higher the cost of building. There might be fewer contractors or builders and a shorter building season. Hauling materials hundreds of miles will add to the cost.

Don't forget about water issues. Scher believes that water will be the main issue of the 21st century. "Make sure you get a capacity recharge test. Pump the well dry and see how long it takes to re-fill. If the perc test is no good, don't buy the property." In Colorado, owners are only permitted to irrigate one acre in 35, hence the size of the lots. "Under 35 acres, you might not get a water permit in Florence

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County," Moore says. "Before getting a building permit, you must get a water permit." Scher warns that out of service wells can be dangerous. "There could be possible contamination." He suggests looking at the National Groundwater Association web site (see Resources). And keep in mind the deeper the well, the higher the cost of drilling.

8. Should the buyer beware?

In his book, Scher warns of fraudulent vacation and recreational land developers who buy land for a pittance, cut it up, and sell it with plans for improvements that never materialize. Have roads, streets, sidewalks or utility lines been put in? In an undeveloped area, there is no guarantee they ever will. Has the developer constructed promised lakes, swimming pools, golf courses? The small print may state that these things do not have to be put in until 90 percent of the lots have been sold, but before that happens the developers move on. Be careful, especially if you are being pressured.

Scher says it is not illegal to sell land-locked property. Watch for easements that show someone else has access. Have a lawyer look over the contract and title search.

Keep an eye on political developments. Land use can change from administration to administration. Are snowmobiles or ATVs allowed in the nearby national forest? That can be a problem if you are looking for quiet. Elections can make all the difference in the sports you love.

9. What do I need to know about construction?

Volz recommends getting as much information as you can before construction begins, from initial design to the color of stains. "Be specific. You will be 200, 400, or even 600 miles from this home, so you won't be stopping by every day. Check out references so you know there's going to be a crew every day. Make sure. It saves a lot of headaches. The relationship between the log home company and the contractor is important, and even more important, your faith in both."

Continued on page 60

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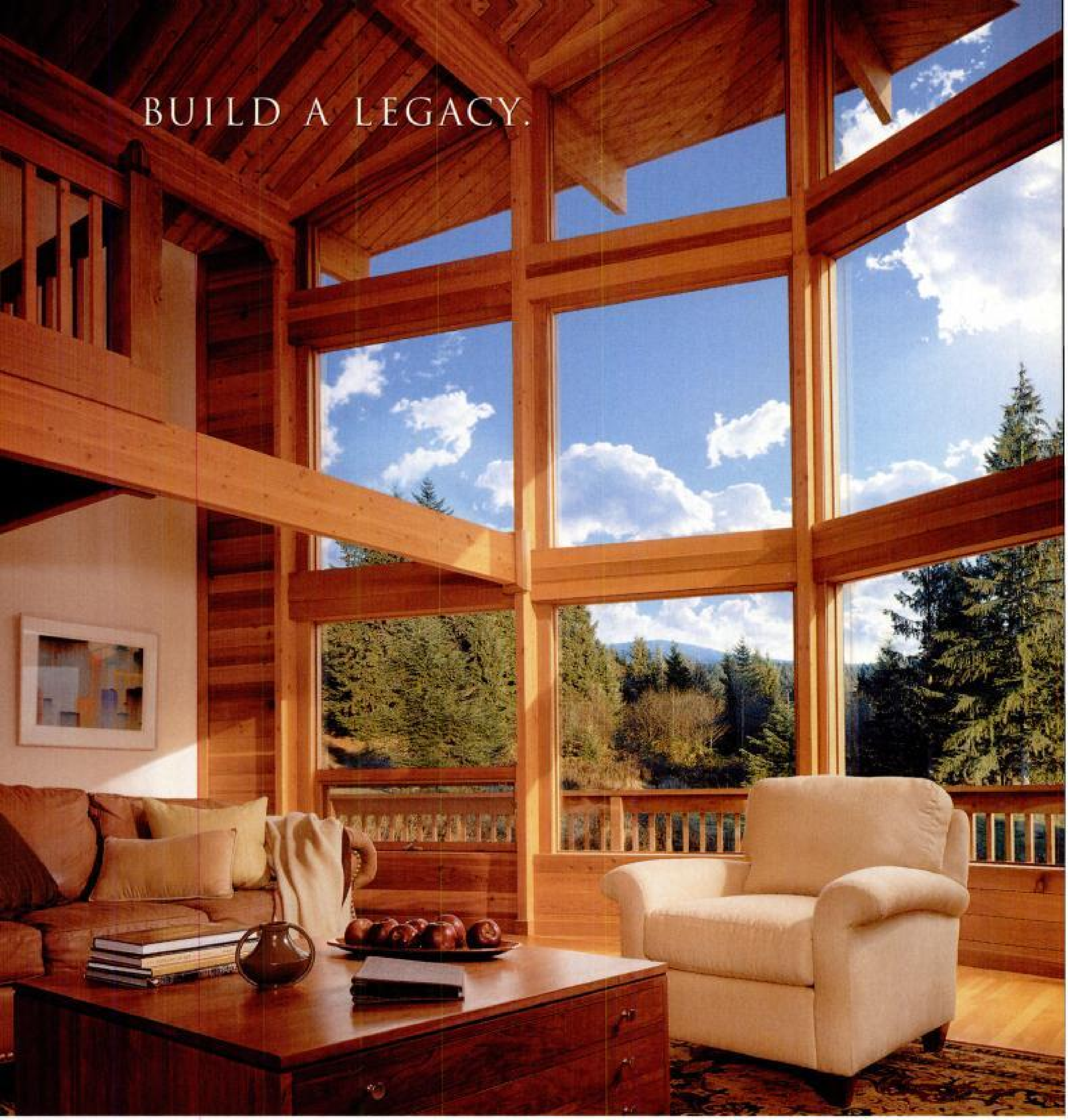

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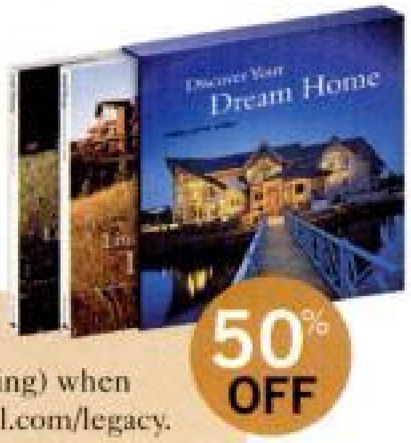

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Circle Reader Response #218

BY BRYAN TRANDEM

Simple Cabin Construction

Do you have what it takes to build your own wilderness cabin? It may be easier than you think.

Illustration by JoeyAnne Russo

Who hasn't dreamed of finding a little plot of remote land in a deeply forested area and building your own rustic one-room log cabin? You would use logs cut from surrounding trees, stripped by hand and assembled with the sweat of your own brow.

Most folks are realistic enough to understand a 3,000 square-foot, multi-room, multi-story log home complete with full plumbing, electrical and HVAC service is probably not in their do-it-yourself future. But what about a little Daniel Boone getaway cabin, a weekend hideaway for fishing or hunting, a hidden retreat known only to yourself and a few lucky friends? Here, you'll have no need for electricity, and an outhouse will do just fine as your master bath.

Is this in the cards for you? The answer is a qualified "yes." Thousands of people have built such cabins and use them happily, as weekend shelters for fishing and hunting excursions, as studios for pursuing writing, painting or other arts, or simply as a hideaway for resting and recharging the inner battery. Getting the cabin you want, though, requires that you have certain skills and can meet certain conditions.

Building Skills

You'll be happy to know that building a one-room cabin doesn't require master carpentry skills. There will be a bit of basic frame carpentry when you apply roofing, lay floorboards and install windows and doors. But if you've ever built a small shed or gazebo, or finished a basement or attic room, you probably have all the basic measuring-cutting-joining expertise you need. Even if you've never done such projects, it won't be terribly hard to learn enough to do the job.

What will be more crucial, though, is your skills with a chain saw and a variety of hewing tools, such as the drawknife, adze and broad axe. These are dangerous tools and it would be foolish to tackle a log cabin unless you're comfortable using them. This point can't be stressed strongly enough. Chain saw and tree-felling accidents are as prevalent as they are serious, and in rural areas these rank second only to car crashes in the tally of accidents that require hospitalization.

Log School

It's possible to gain the necessary skills by reading books and practicing on your own — many people do just that. But another option is to take a course offered by a log building school. Several of these schools are aimed specifically at amateur owner-builders rather than trade professionals, offering courses that last from two days to 12 weeks, at costs ranging from $500 to $3,000. Buying or renting tools costs extra, but the total package price can be a good investment, especially if you have aspirations of building a multi-room cabin.

One such school is the Great Lakes School of Log Building, located in northern Minnesota. Ron Brodigan has run this school for 29 years, offering 10 classes per year that teach a comprehensive building method, from harvesting and stripping logs and building the foundation, to finishing

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the inside of the cabin. Ron reports that even complete amateurs with no building experience can successfully learn the craft of log cabin construction.

"Scribing the logs for cutting tends to be the skill most difficult to learn," he says, referring to the process by which the bottoms and ends of logs are notched and grooved to fit snugly together. Once this skill is mastered, though, there is little standing in the way of success.

Although the scale is much larger, the process bears a striking resemblance to putting together a children's Lincoln Log cabin.

Like all the schools, Great Lakes places a strong premium on safety; required equipment includes steel-toed boots, hard hats and protective clothing.

Another school is the Lasko School of Log Building, run by Bill Lasko. This school places a premium on learning chain saw skills. Students spend two full days simply gaining comfort with the tools, then work together on the construction of a log cabin over a course period that lasts two, four, eight or 12 weeks.

Most log-building schools offer on-site accommodations — usually bunkhouses — as part of the course fee. Food is sometimes a separate expense.

A Proper Site

You can have all the skills in the world, but without the proper building site, your log cabin won't be the stuff of dreams. Here's what you should have:

Proper seclusion. Because cabins tend to draw the curious, it's wise to build your cabin in a spot that's not glaringly evident to passersby. But as J. Wayne Fears notes in his book *How to Build Your Dream Cabin*, it's not only possible but common to build a cabin that is too remote and secluded. "I have known of more back country cabins being sold, soon after being built, due to too much solitude rather than too little," he observes. Think carefully if you imagine that you want utter seclusion — it may be that a little privacy is really all you need.

Access. Seclusion is fine, but a site that can't be accessed by road will be a nightmare to build on. In addition to the logs, you'll have quite a lot of tools and building materials to haul, so make sure there is relatively open access to your site.

Building materials. Building a cabin is easier and less expensive if the land around your site has available building materials. A forest filled with straight pine, fir, spruce or tamarack trees 8" to 10" in diameter is ideal. If the area has stones that can be used to construct foundations or piers, so much the better. It is, of course, possible to buy logs and foundation stone and have them trucked in, but this will add to the cost of your cabin.

Water supply. You can, of course, carry in water each time you visit your cabin, but a much better solution is to build near a stream, spring or lake that provides water for washing and cleaning. Drinking water can be obtained by filtering and purifying stream or lake water, or by drilling a well.

Shelter. The best building sites offer natural shelter from wind, rain and sun. A hillside, for example, can shelter a cabin from strong winds and a grove of trees can shelter a cabin from the sun, making it much more pleasant in warm weather.

Time & Patience

By any estimate, building a log cabin takes a lot more time than building a traditionally framed structure. Some estimates say you should allow up to 7 hours per log if you're cutting and harvesting logs yourself — and even a small cabin might require 60 logs or more. Basic construction can easily take 12 to 16 weeks of full-time work, and much, much longer if you're only working on weekends and spare evenings, as many people do.

In addition, the logs you cut will need time to dry and season. Most experts suggest logs sit a full year before using them to build. Two full years of drying is even better. Some log-building schools suggest the construction of a log cabin is a three or four year project, from site selection to your first happy night sleeping in a furnished cabin.

Strength & Stamina

Building a log cabin isn't for those timid of spirit or weak of back. A 16' log can weigh more than 300 pounds, and wielding chain saws and axes requires both physical strength and stamina. Many experts suggest a period of physical training before

The Right Tools

Don't even think about building your own cabin without the right mental tools. Proper preparation will save you time, money and heartache. Start with websites and books. If you want something more hands-on, take a log building class.

Books:

A Home From the Woods,
Michael Antoniak
Writers Club Press
Phone: 877-288-4737
www.iuniverse.com

Cabins: A Guide to Building Your Own Nature Retreat,
David and Jeanie Stiles
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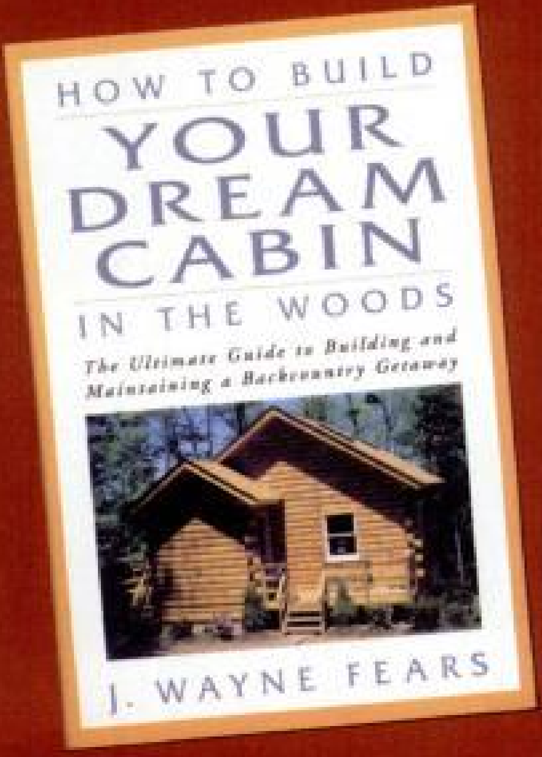

How to Build Your Dream Cabin in the Woods,
J. Wayne Fears
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continued on page 34

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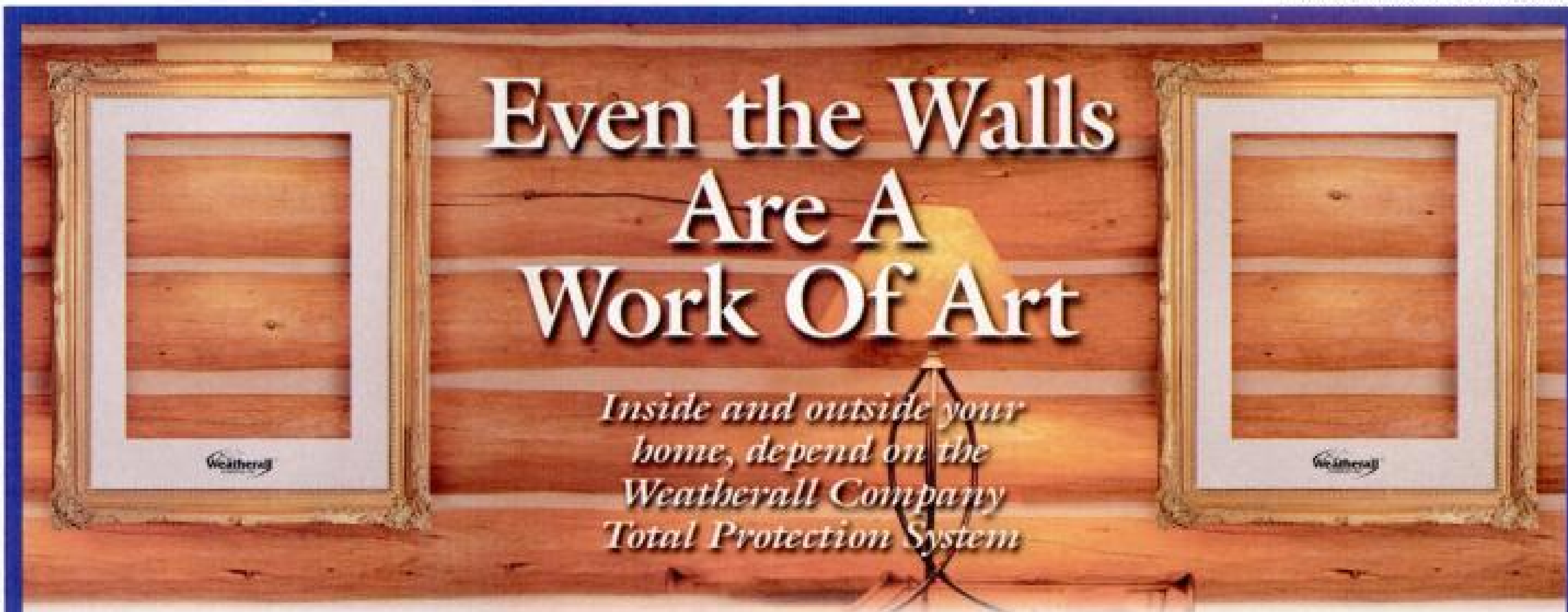

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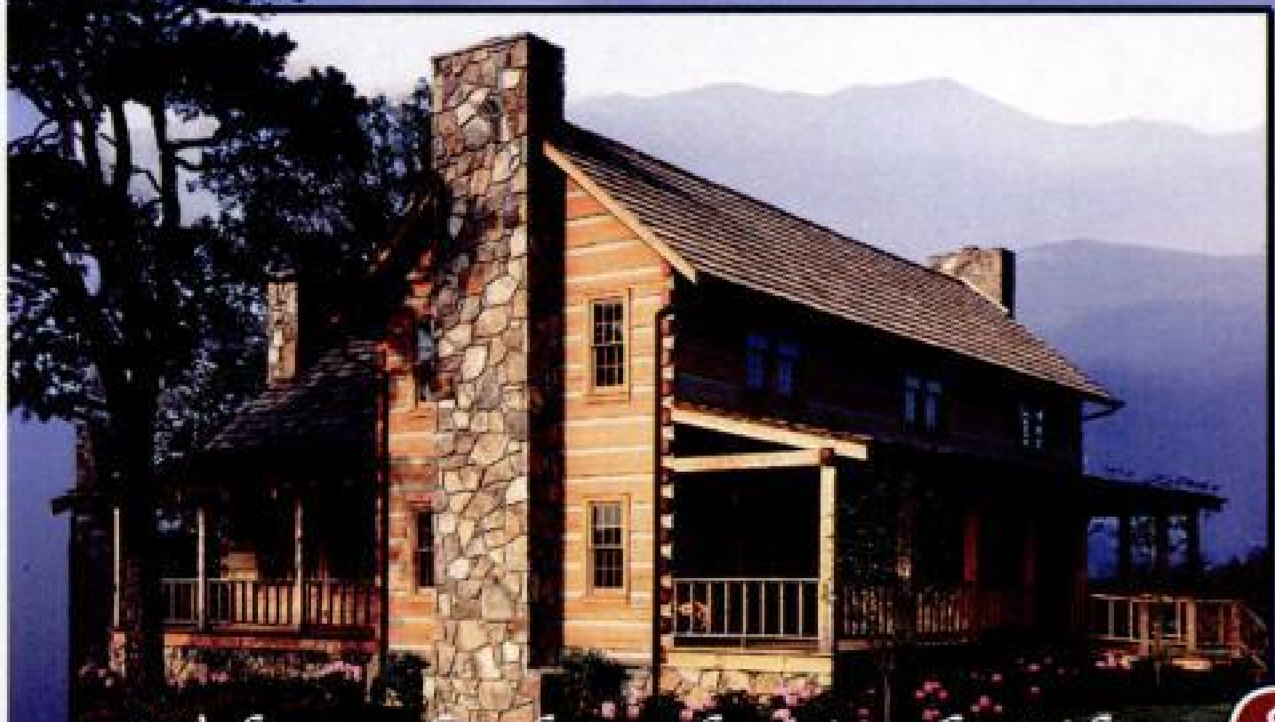

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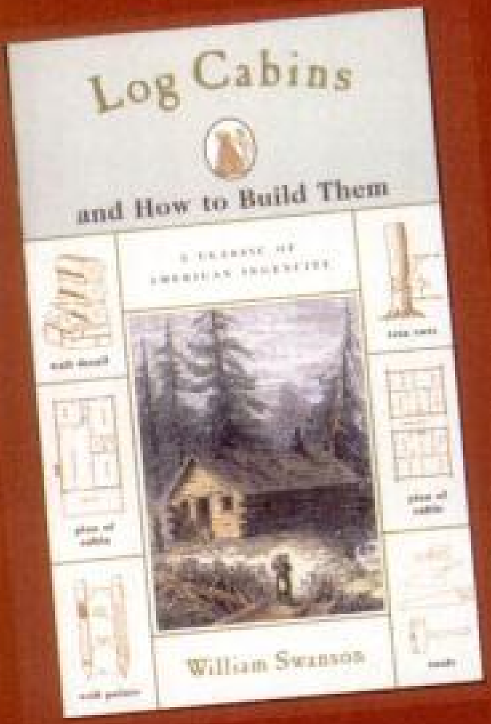
Bryan Trandem has written and edited several best-selling books on home improvement, remodeling and landscaping. He currently serves as executive editor of Creative Publishing International, a leading DIY publisher.



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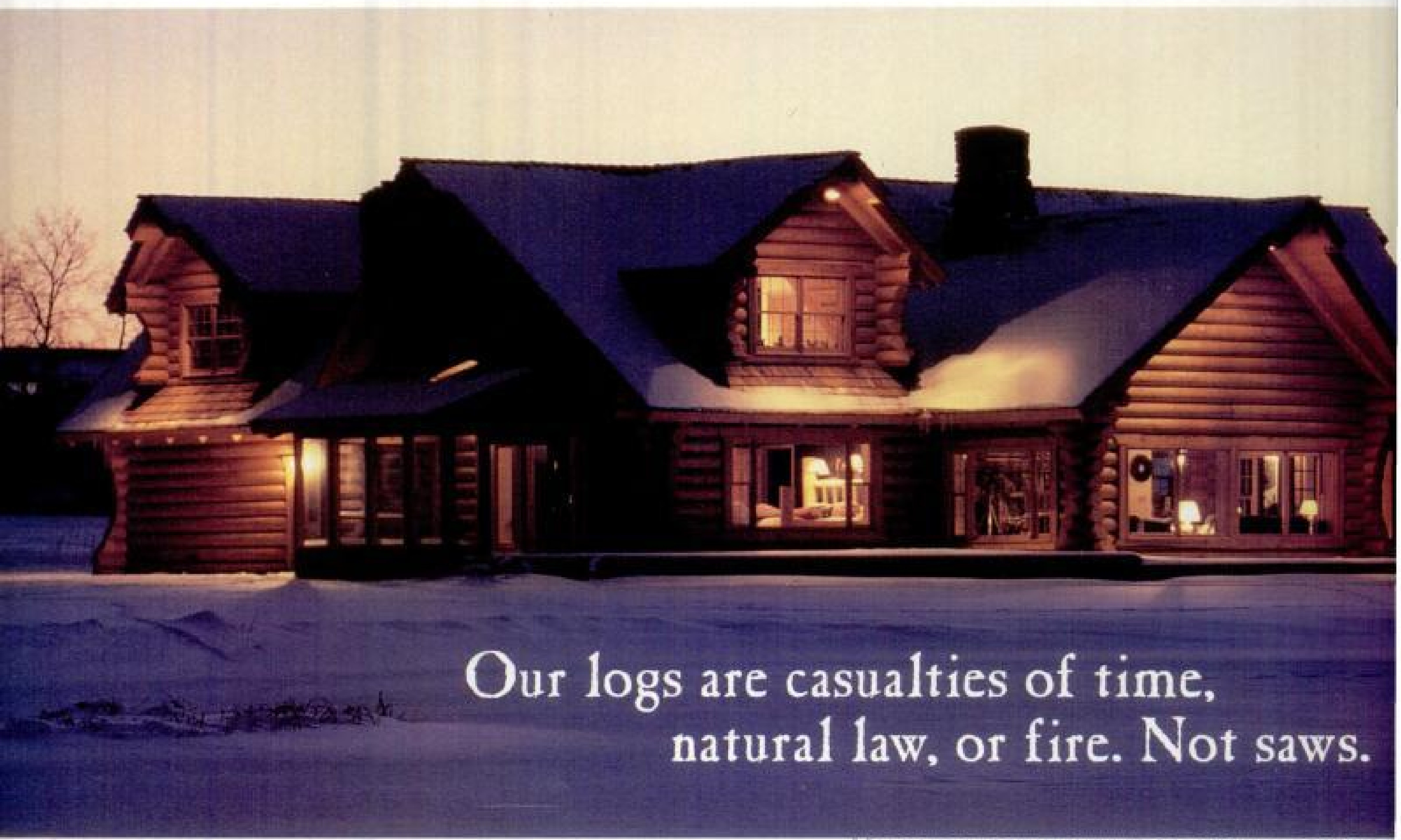

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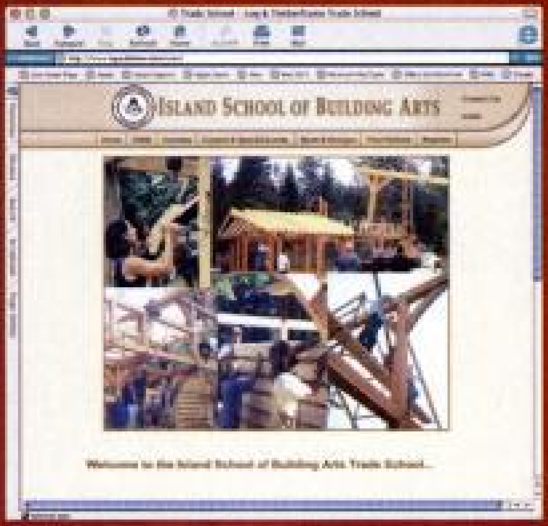

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Websites:

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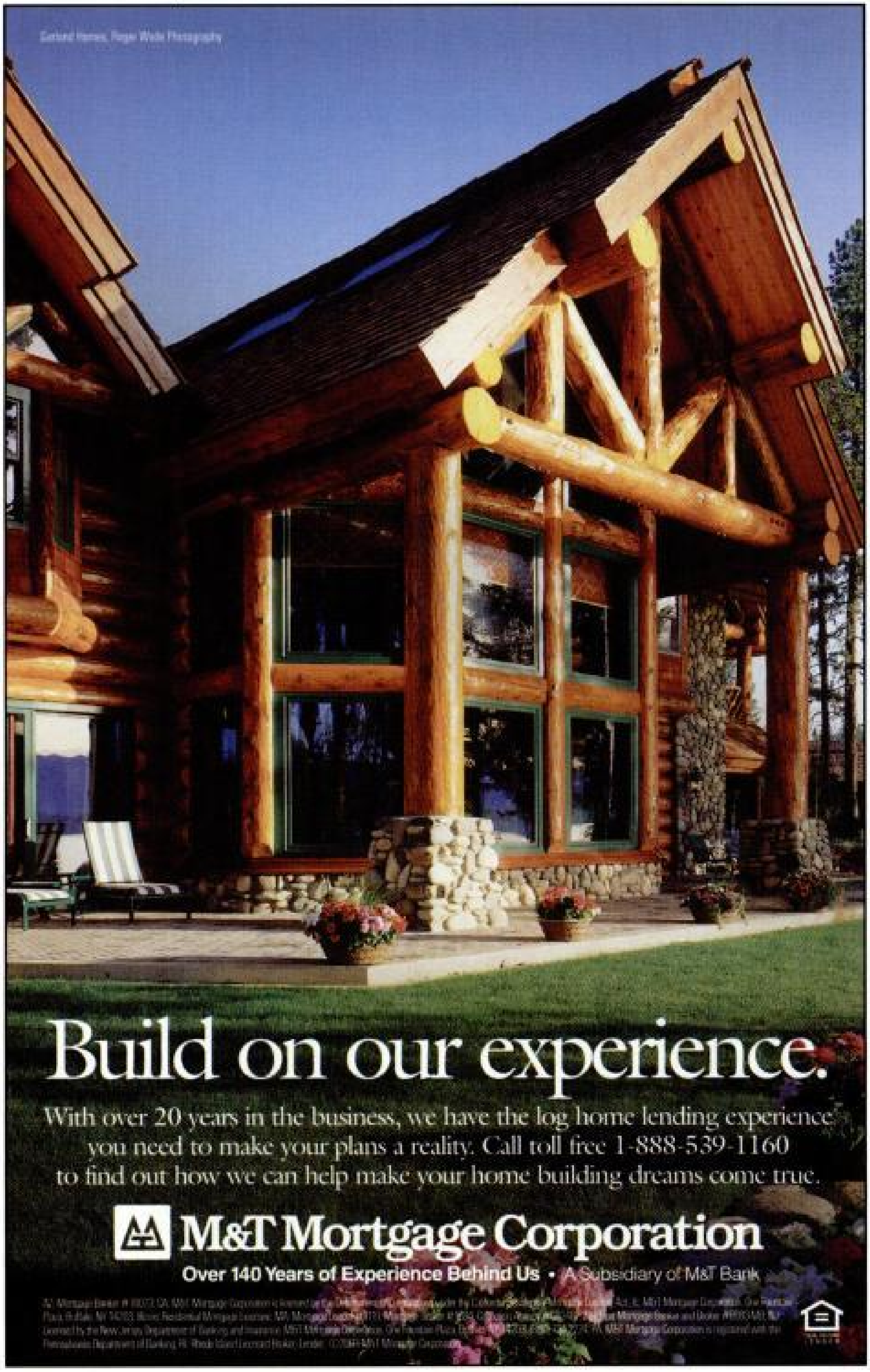

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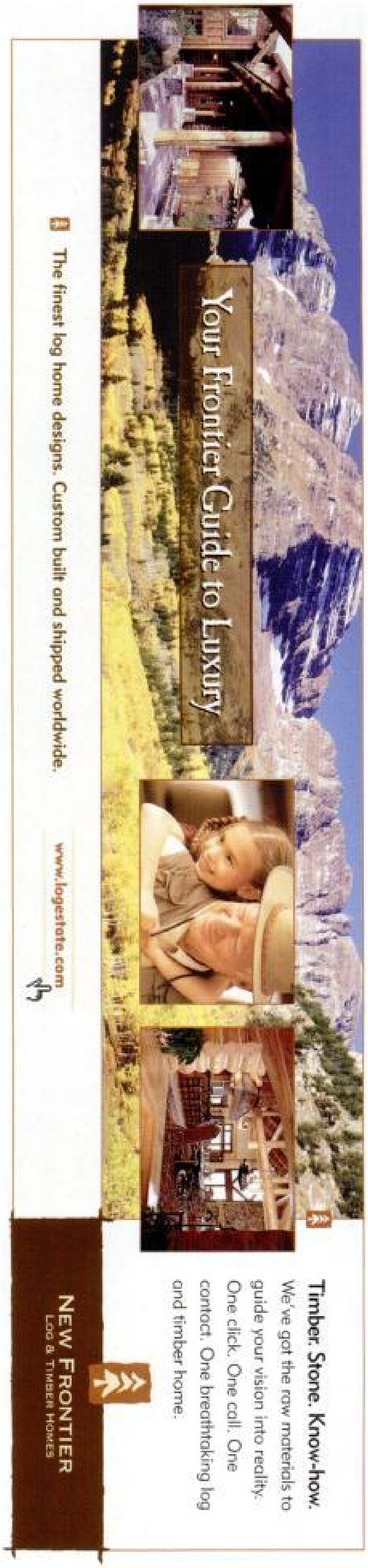

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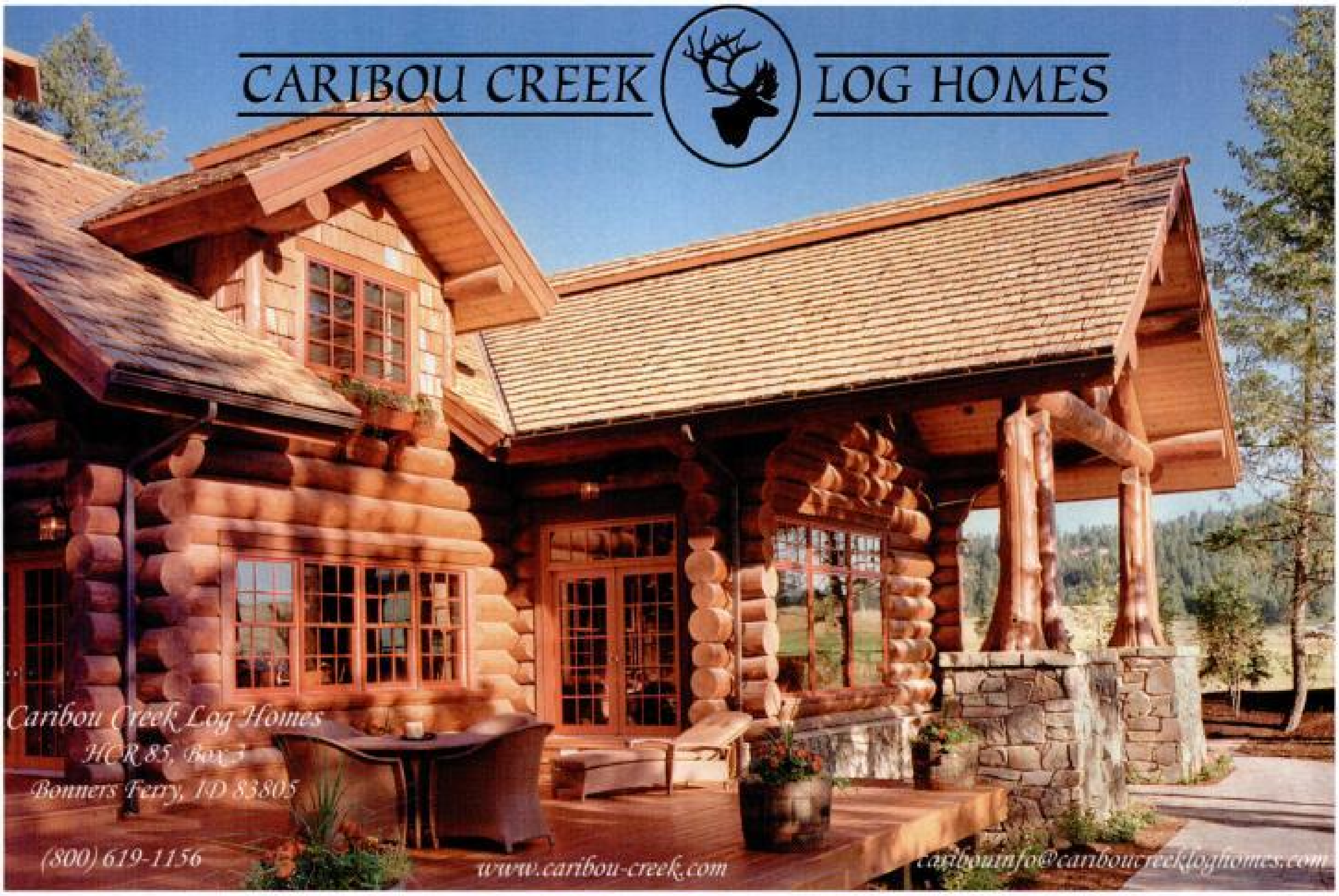

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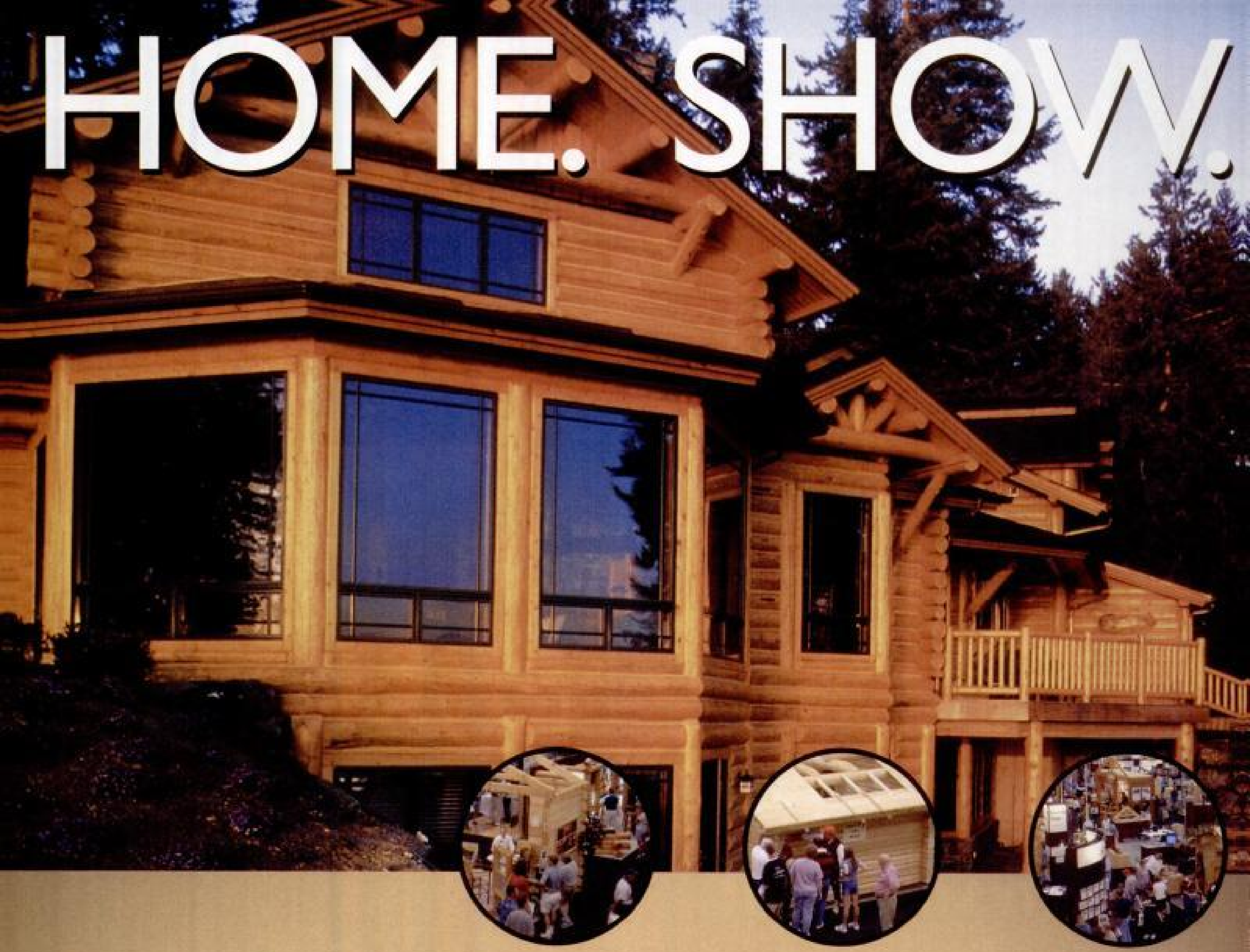

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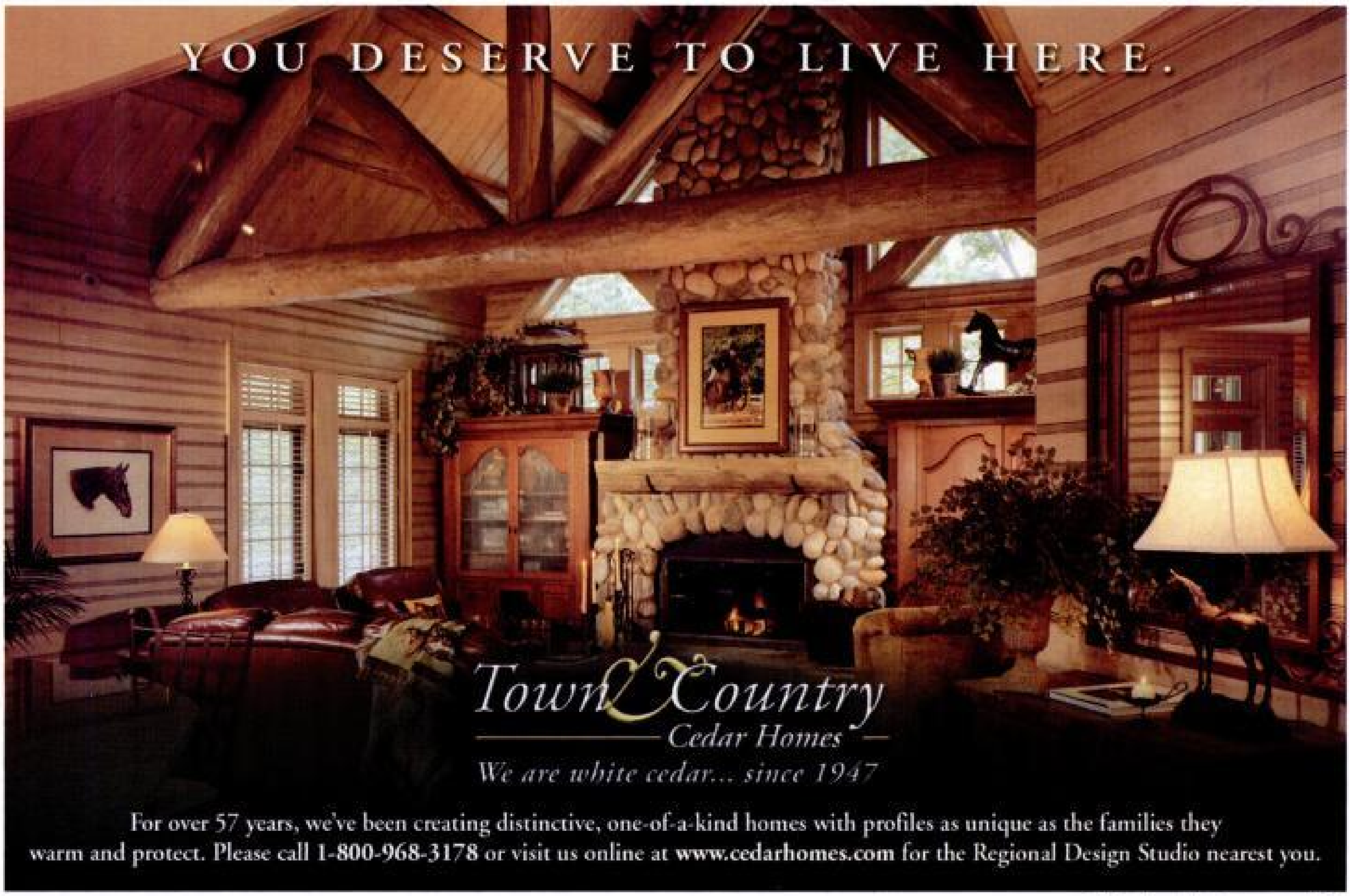

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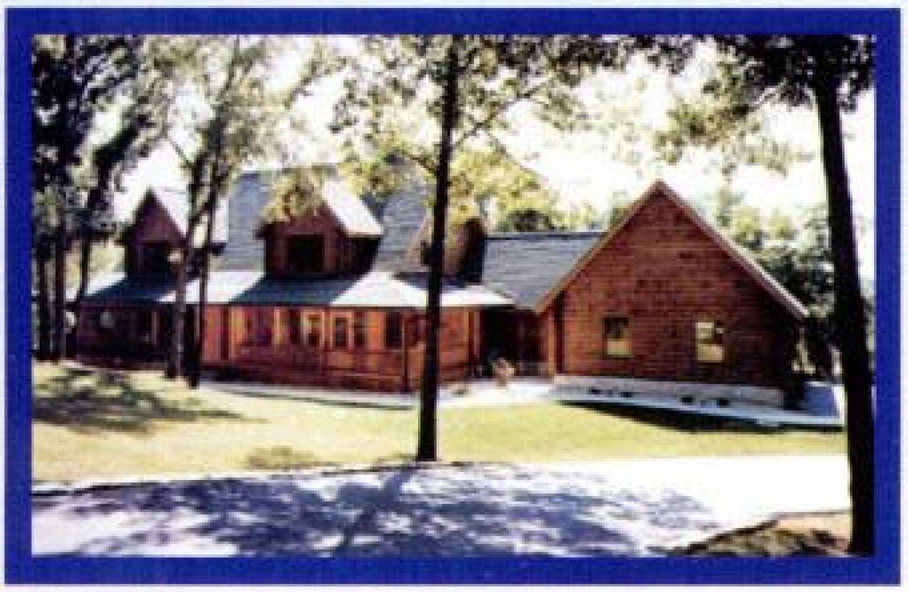

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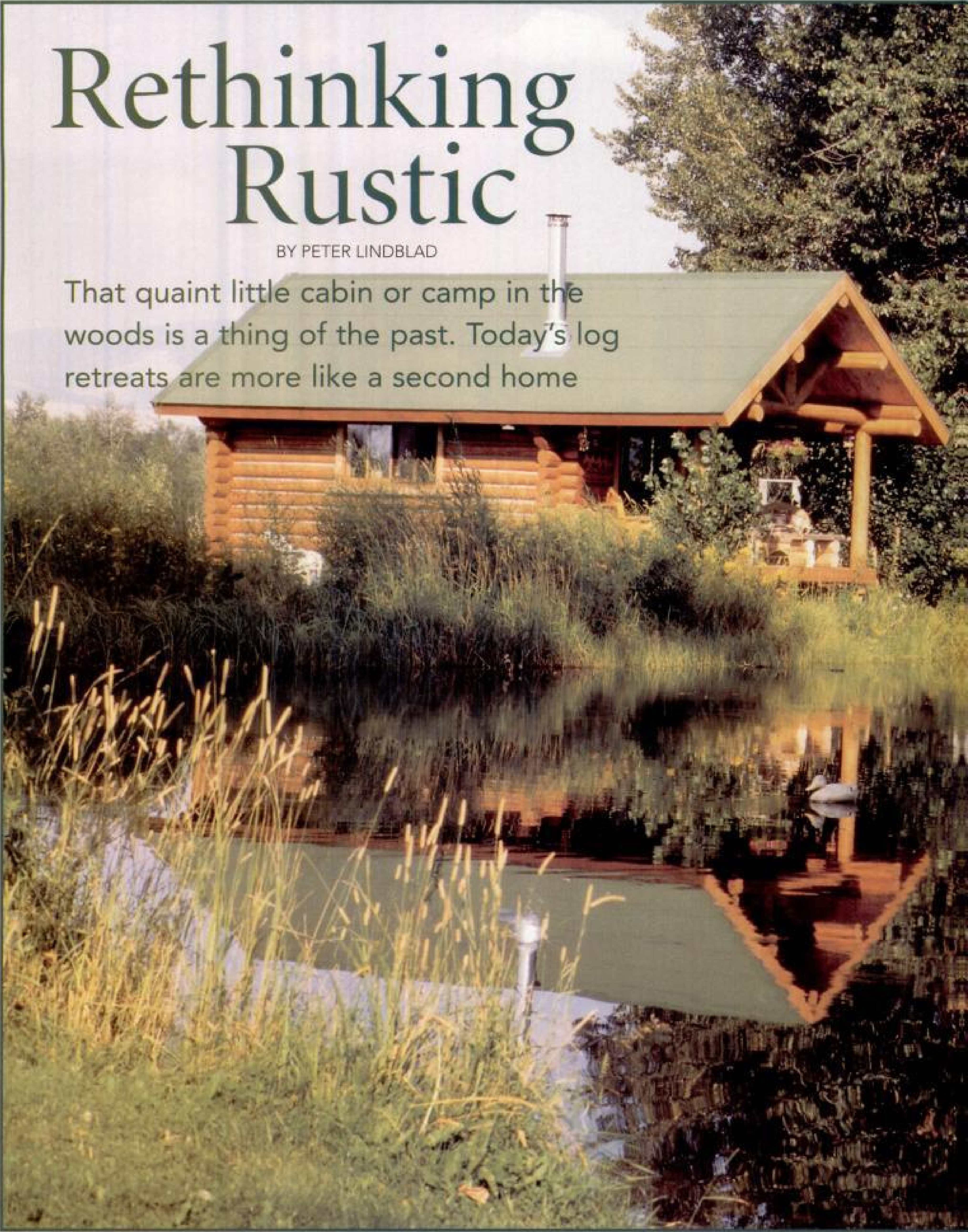
Rethinking Rustic

BY PETER LINDBLAD

That quaint little cabin or camp in the woods is a thing of the past. Today's log retreats are more like a second home



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Photos By Cindy Thiede

Cabins are places where people go to relax. What could be more soothing for the soul than sitting in a garden of colorful flowers, thick foliage and works of art like the beautiful sculpture above? Having a place that's easy to maintain is what cabin owners strive for. The plantings shown here leave only a small plot of grass to mow.

Forget everything you thought you knew about camps and cabins. The simple, rustic retreats of old aren't so simple anymore.

Remember that smelly old outhouse back in the trees? It's gone, replaced by indoor plumbing. That woodburning stove that barely pumped out enough heat to keep you from freezing now has help in the form of a furnace to keep its owners warm. And instead of using the campfire to cook and reading by candlelight, a lot of cabins have a stove to make gourmet meals and enough electric light to keep you from going blind.

"The ones we all grew up with, the ones your grandma and grandpa used to own that had indoor plumbing if you were lucky, those are gone for the most part," says Brian Breit, national sales manager for Wilderness Log Homes. "Nobody's roughing it anymore."

Joe Folker, director of network services for Kuhns Bros. Log Homes, agrees. "What used to be very rustic, very basic structures have become filled with amenities you'd find in primary residences," he says. "People don't want to sacrifice the conveniences they have at home."

Traditional Values

We all know what a cabin or camp is when we see it. By definition, a cabin is a small, roughly built house and sometimes a camp isn't much more than a shack. Those notions are changing. Many of today's cabins and camps resemble primary homes.

Still, the basic architectural features haven't changed all that much.

"Given the history of these structures, all of them are kind of limited as far as home size to smaller homes," Breit says. "As far as size goes, they can be as small as 200 square feet and go up to as big as 1,500 square feet."

The designs often aren't very complicated. "Architecturally, they're usually very simple," Breit says. "They have simple roof lines, although some may have shed roofs or gable roofs." That simplicity extends to the interior, which features a lot of wood in the walls.

"Typically, these are two-bedroom places," Breit says. "If you need more places to sleep, the loft layout may be sleeping quarters. Most have open design

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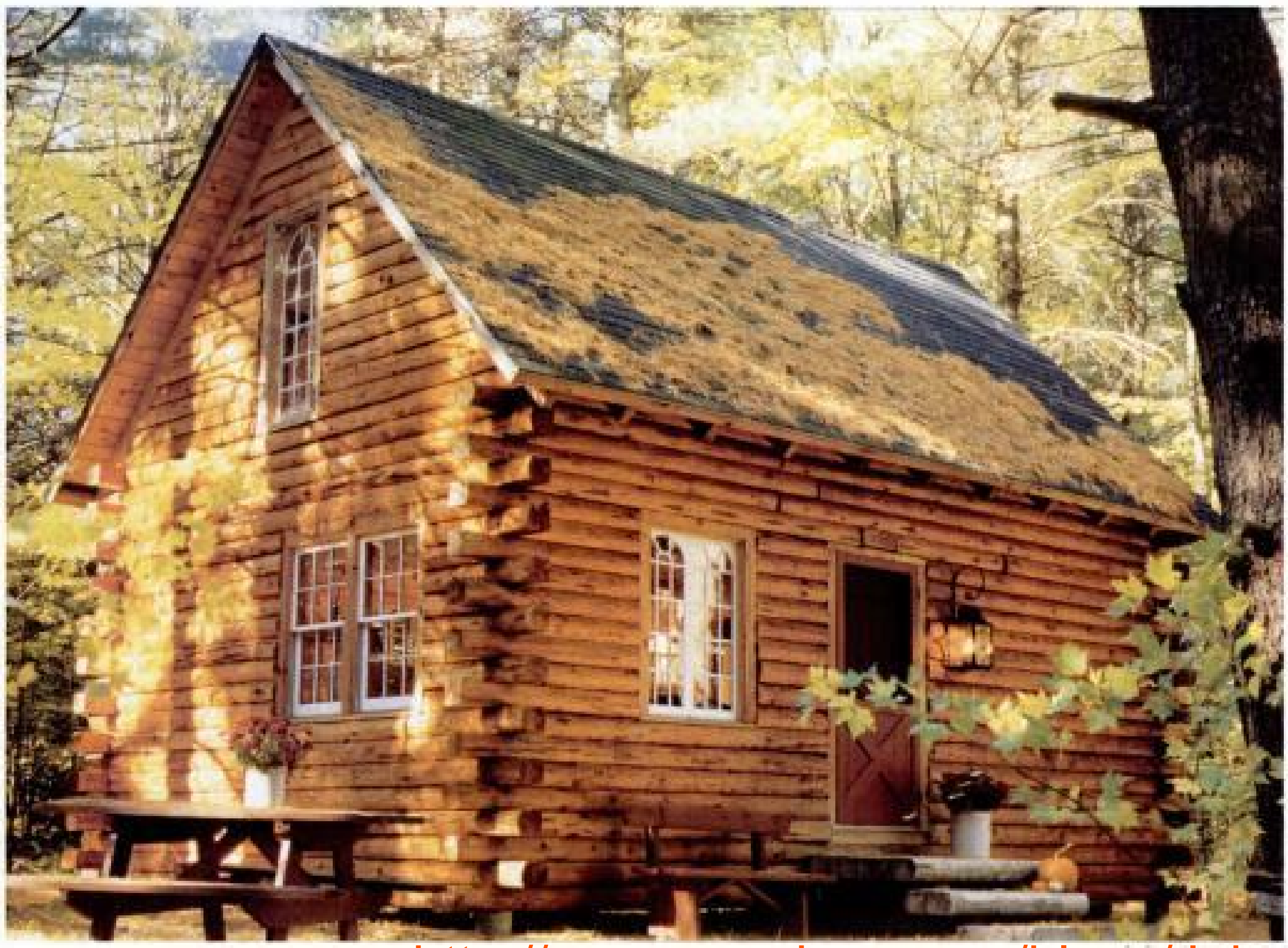

If you're going to build a retreat, you want to have a nice view. The rolling hills and grassy meadows of the countryside can be an inexpensive alternative to costly waterfront property.

Appearance is more important than ever. That's why the quality of building materials, including logs, used for such retreats has improved. "People are not willing to sacrifice on the overall aesthetics of the logs," says Joe Folker of Kuhns Bros. Log Homes.

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Porches extend the living space of a camp or cabin, making the structure feel much bigger. They also extend space for entertaining family and friends.

concepts. There are not a lot of interior walls. All the rooms open up to each other, with the exception of the bathroom. Open design concepts can be popular with main homes, too, but you don't see it all the time like you do with camps and cabins."

Often, camps and cabins are built on piers or slabs, as opposed to having full basements. The heating and cooling systems are often seasonable, so many of these places are not four-season structures. Instead of big fireplaces, camps and cabins usually have woodburning stoves or smaller fireplace collections.

"In primary homes, you usually see fireplaces that are gas because people don't appreciate wood being hauled in," Breit says. "In a cabin up north, it's not an issue. Plus, in these places there aren't always natural gas sources."

A lot of camps and cabins don't have garages. If they do, it's usually a one-car garage or a storage unit for a boat and other toys.

"Camps and cabins have really turned the corner. In the past, they were nothing more than large bunkhouses."

What a lot of camps and cabins have in common is a porch or a deck for spending time outside. More often than not, these structures have a lot of glazing to view the natural wonders of their property, like meadows or lakes or the woods. "There's often a common area with a glass wall of some sort," Breit says.

Changing Times

The old log cabin isn't what it used to be. Today, the designs are bigger than ever, with some homeowners envisioning such structures eventually becoming retirement homes.

"Camps and cabins have really turned the corner," Folker says. "In the past, they were nothing more than large bunkhouses. The camps and cabins of today are more like cottages with all the amenities."

Features like a dishwasher, refrigerator, granite countertops, plush carpeting, a stocked bar for entertaining, expansive

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Space is often at a premium in camps and cabins, which are usually smaller than primary residences. Bunk beds make effective use of otherwise cramped sleeping quarters for kids. Don't forget dressers. If you don't have much closet space, you'll need them to store clothes.

glass and outdoor cooking and preparation areas are becoming more common.

"People want a return on their investment," Folker says. "You don't want to take a $300,000 piece of property and set a $50,000 house down on it. Now these places are four-season homes you can visit anytime of the year you want."

Lynn Gastineau, owner of Gastineau Log Homes, has also noticed that camp and cabin designs are more elaborate.

"Bigger, bigger, bigger — that's what we're seeing, and more amenities," Gastineau says. "It used to be people would come in and want something simple to keep the price down. Now, they're coming in wanting places that cost as much as their regular homes. These places are much more high-end, and we're seeing very expensive designs with huge window walls. People are building in places with great views, so they want lots of glass and lots of decks and porches."

> "They aren't just hunting and fishing lodges anymore."

So what are people spending their money on? "Gourmet kitchens, hot tubs, luxurious master bedroom suites," Breit says. "That doesn't mean [these houses] are big, but they have all the amenities of the primary residence."

The focus is usually on bedrooms. "You don't see closets typically, but you do see dressers or high-boys, and in the bathrooms, you have the sink and toilet, but you also either see larger than average showers or a jetted tub," Breit adds.

Cathedral ceilings are a must in the main living areas. "It's rare you see anybody building with a flat truss," Breit says. "Higher ceilings make the space feel bigger."

Breit says more people are installing skylights and solar tubes to capture more natural light.

Things To Keep In Mind

More often than not, a camp or cabin is built way off the beaten path. The privacy is nice, but being so far removed from civilization brings challenges.

Setbacks and zoning. Many camps and cabins are built on waterfront property. Most of the time, that means tight building sites. "You've got to keep in mind setbacks, the water and lot lines," Breit says.

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Cabin designs usually keep things simple. That's why open designs like this, where the living room, dining area and kitchen all open to each other, are so popular. Cabins with simple designs also cost less to build, leaving you more money for amenities.

"A lot of people are building with half-logs, which require less maintenance than full logs, for smaller secondary homes."

"A lot of people come in with grandiose ideas and the place they want doesn't fit the property. People are often surprised the setbacks go back as far as they do."

Folker agrees. "I've seen a few times where people didn't understand the zoning requirements and the setbacks," he says. "In some places they can be 50 feet. You have to make sure water is accessible."

The same thing goes for zoning. You want to be able to use your land the way you want, so check the regulations and zoning laws affecting your property.

Septic and well. "They can wreak havoc with your budget and affect your overall happiness with the property," Folker says.

It's important to know if you need a septic system, first off, and if you do, you need the proper permits and must find out what type of system will work for your particular piece of property. "If it won't perc and you have to put in a septic system, all of a sudden the land you got such a good deal on isn't such a good deal anymore," Gastineau says.

Access to utilities. If you're going to be using your camp or cabin a lot, you'll probably want it to have electricity and running water. To find out if you can get service, talk to your Realtor. If they don't know, call the local utilities.

And what if the power goes out? It's a good idea to have a back-up generator. Many cabin owners build sheds to hold them.

Road access. If you're building, you

Rent To Own

A good way to pay for your camp or cabin is to rent it out.

"You can get a good portion of your mortgage paid that way," says Lynn Gastineau, owner of Gastineau Log Homes. "You get your house paid for with other people's rent."

Rental programs are becoming increasingly popular. "We've sold a tremendous amount of log homes using that program here, and it's got a lot of validity in other parts of the U.S," Gastineau says. "So many people love the idea of taking a vacation in a log home."

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need a road for shipping materials to your construction site. "Adding gravel can drive up the cost of getting your property up to where you can actually build on it," Gastineau says.

But what about after you build or buy a vacation property? Is road access that important? It depends on how you use the property.

"Some people use their places all year long, some just use them as summer homes," Folker says. "If that's the case, they don't care if the roads are plowed in the winter."

Maintenance. The last thing camp or cabin owners want is a place that's high maintenance. There are steps you can take to make your camp or cabin easy to take care of.

"A lot of people are building with half-logs, which require less maintenance than full logs, for smaller secondary homes," Breit says. "There aren't issues with settling and problems with cracking and checking are eliminated."

Another tip: put in a mudroom by the entry. "It's a good place for removing soiled clothes," Folker says. "It's especially nice when you have a summer place by the lake. You can have a combination changing room and mudroom, and even add bath facilities. What is a mudroom in the winter can be a changing area in the summer."

A place that's hard to clean can be a headache. So, many people are installing easy-to-clean tile in the entryways, kitchen areas and baths. "I'm seeing a lot of variety of floor coverings, and you can get a lot of vinyl replications of stone and slate where you have to look twice to see that it's not real," Folker says.

One Last Word

When buying vacation property or designing and building a retreat, try to be accommodating to everyone in your family. "They aren't just hunting and fishing lodges anymore," Folker says. "They're now weekend retreats for families."

RESOURCES:

Gastineau Log Homes
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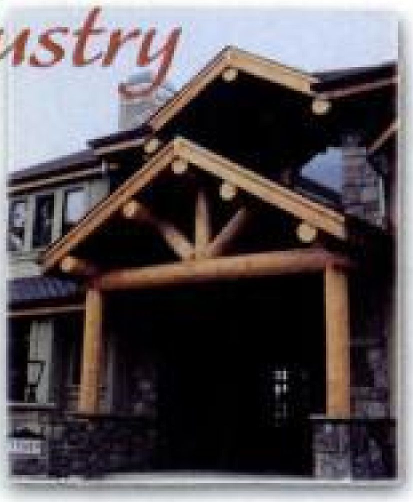

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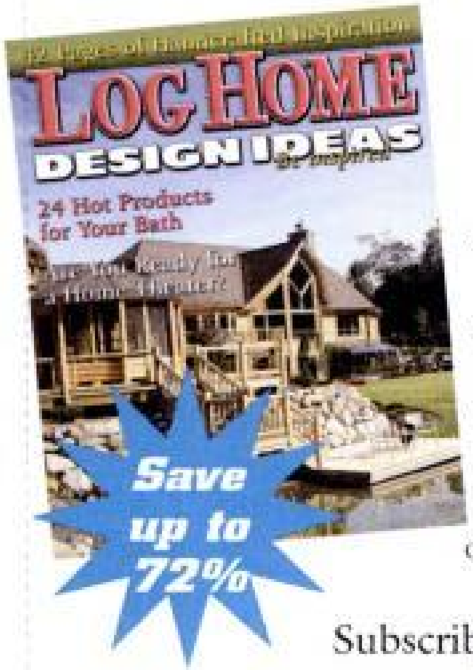

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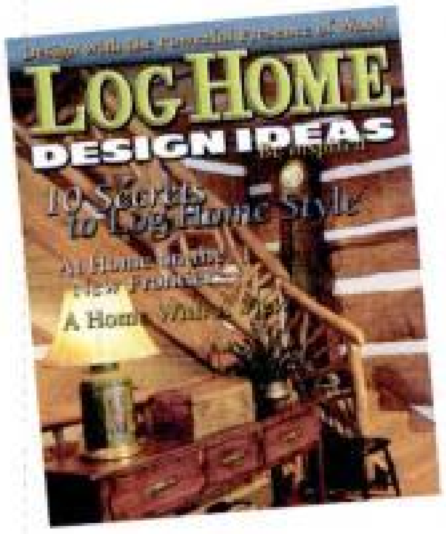

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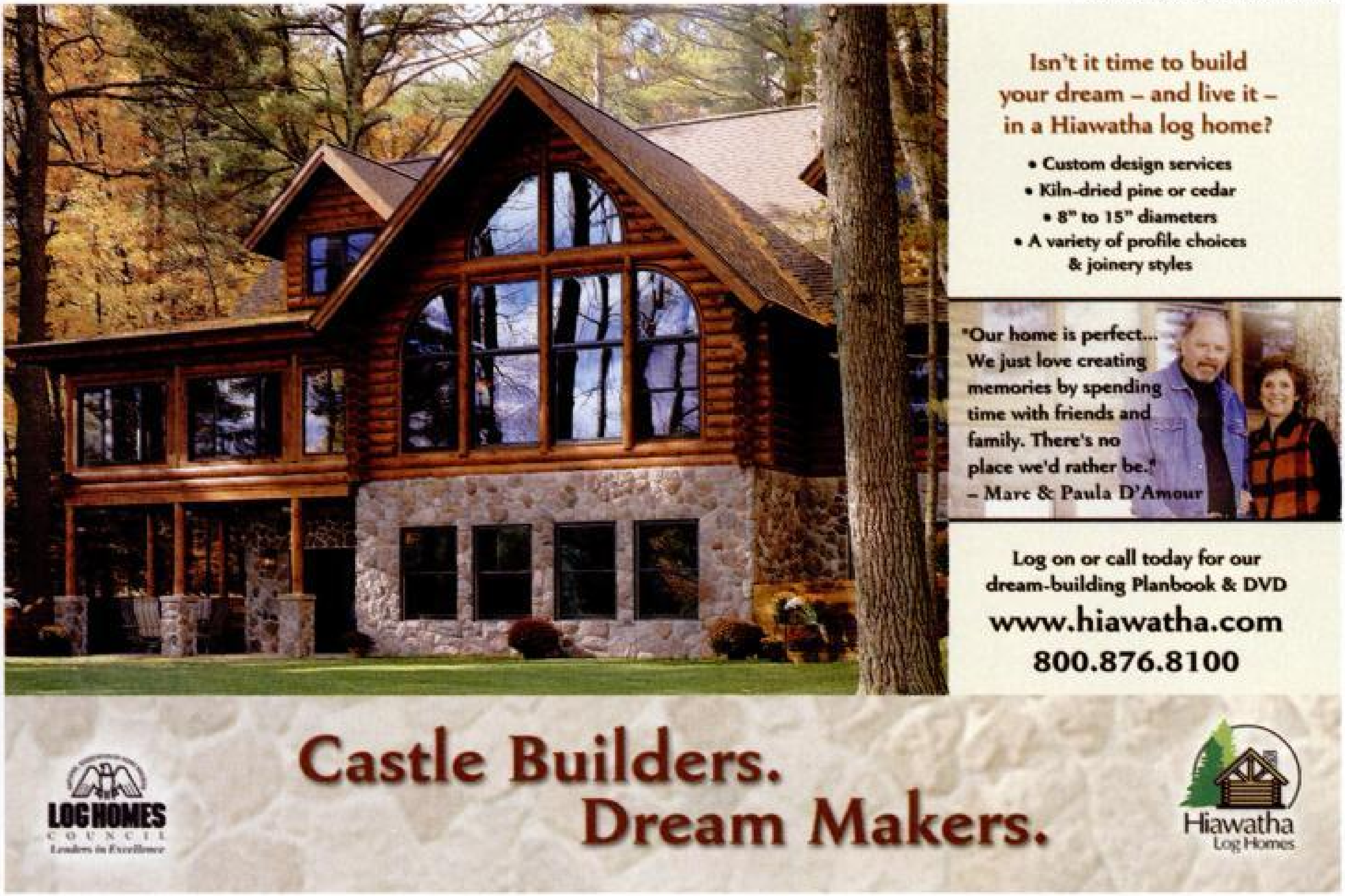

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Photo By Heidi A. Marty

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Strategic Stair Design

Step up your home's design with these expert tips for proper stair placement

BY JAY UHLENBRAUCK

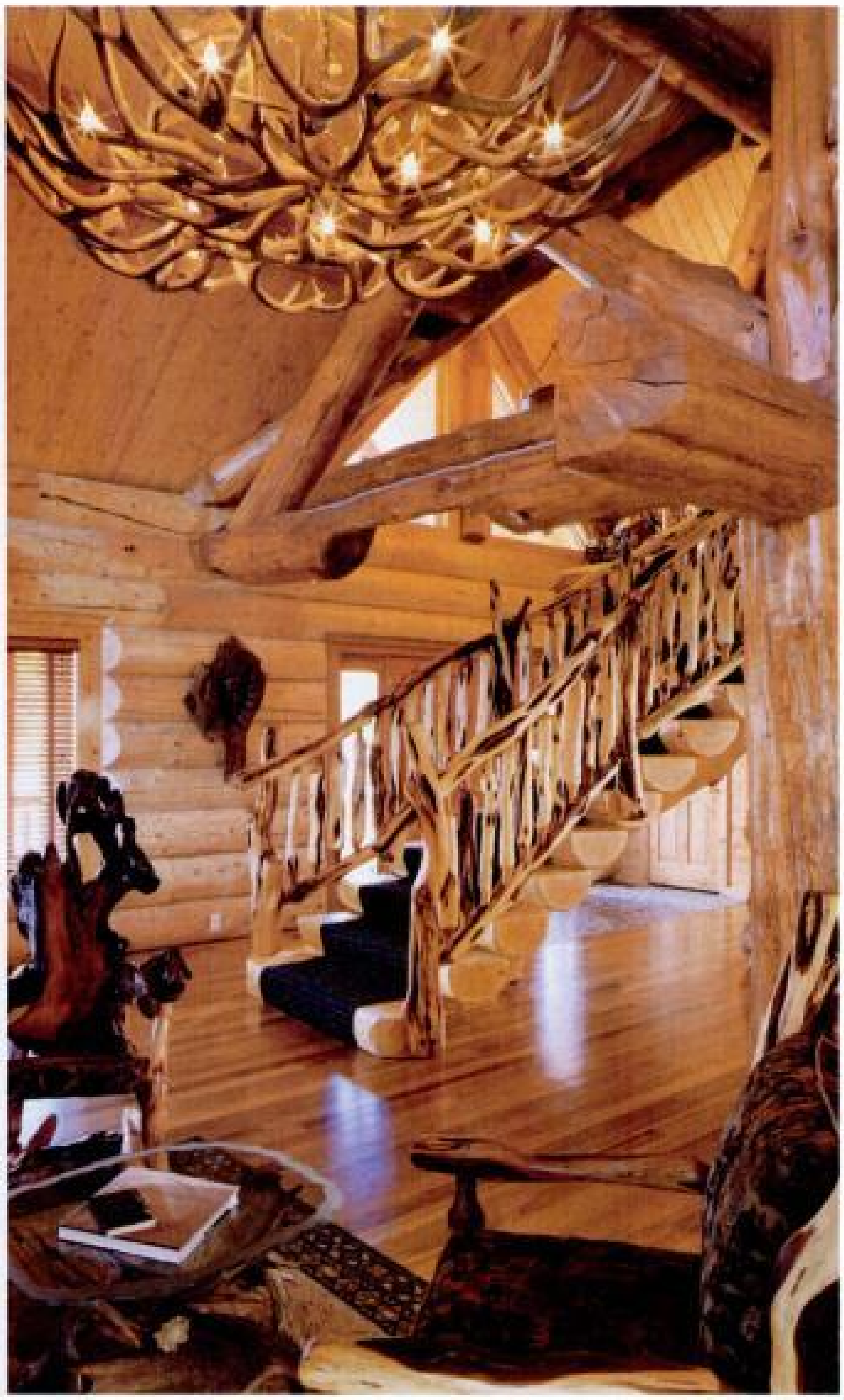

Photo Courtesy Yellowstone Log Homes

Stair placement has a big impact on how your log home looks and functions. "Showcase" stairs work well in entryways or great rooms where they are most visible.

Unless you are building a ranch-style home, stair design will have a big impact on the look, layout and livability of your log home. Most homeowners carefully consider materials and style when choosing stairs, but what about placement?

Although stairs aren't always the first thing homeowners think about when laying out a floor plan, you can be sure it's one of the first considerations for designers.

"Because the staircase is so critical in the design of a multi-level home, the location must be of primary consideration from the very beginning of the design process," says residential designer Larry Garnett. "In many cases, the floor plan is really designed around the stairs."

Stairs should never be an afterthought. "It's just as important as where the fireplace goes," says Rick Taron, president of Taron Design, Inc. "It's influential on the rest of the plan."

Traffic Flow

Perhaps the most important consideration when placing stairs is traffic flow. In many cases, the stairs actually direct traffic throughout the home.

"Traffic flow is the most important issue," Taron says. "Where you start out on the first floor and end up on the second floor is really important. It's just like a highway situation; you want the exit and entry points to be in high-traffic areas where you will have easy access."

This means placing stairs adjacent to heavily travelled areas like the kitchen or great room. Those entry points then direct traffic to upstairs bedrooms, a downstairs rec room and other out-of-the-way spaces.

Make A Statement

Placement will depend on the type of stair you plan to install. For example, if you are installing a set of "showcase" stairs, make sure they are showcased. You wouldn't want to buy a beautiful custom staircase and then hide it in a corner.

"Since the staircase potentially can become one of the strongest

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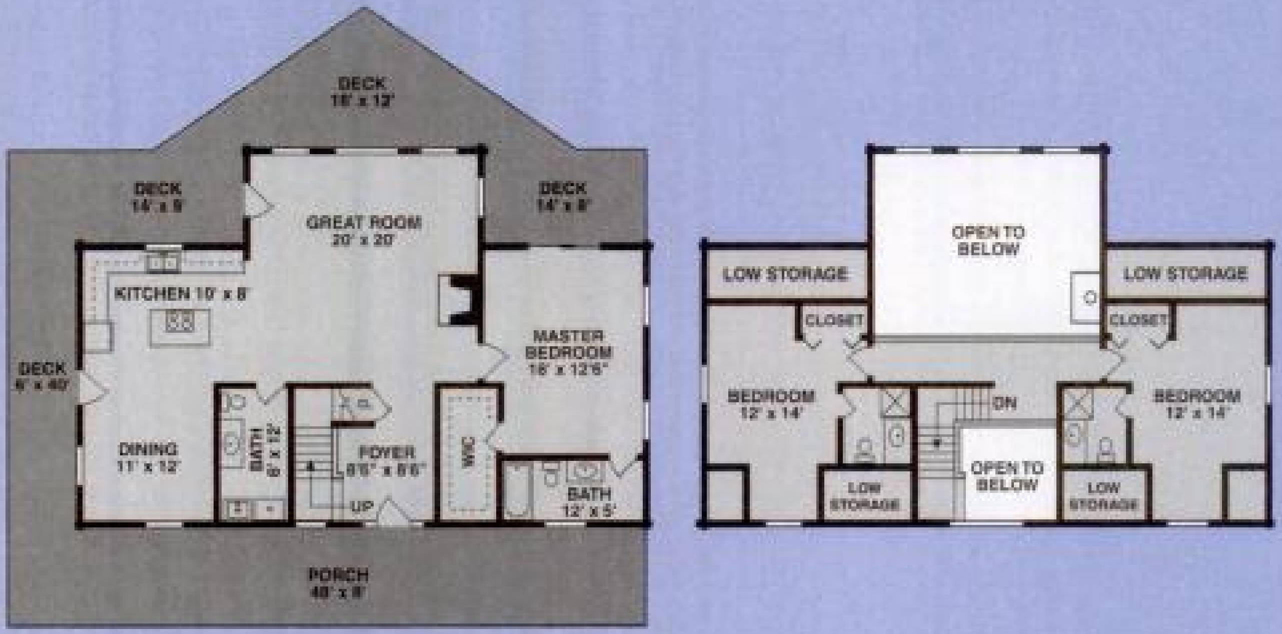
Stair Placement Options

A centrally located stairway allows easy access from high-traffic first floor spaces to an upstairs bedroom and a downstairs office/bedroom. A straight run ensures it will be easy to move furniture up and down. Stacking stairs is the most efficient way to place stairs in a multi-level home.



Placing the stairway in the entry provides an opportunity to show off a custom staircase. The L-shape adds interest and provides a landing that can function as a resting point or a spot to display art. It is also safer than a straight run of stairs since it reduces the length of a fall. With the stairs in a lofted space, it isn't necessary to cut a hole in an upper floor to install them.

Enchanted Forest Floor Plan Courtesy American LogSystems (top); Fair Oaks floor Plan Courtesy Appalachian Log Structures (bottom)

architectural elements of a home, we often place it prominently in the entry area," Garnett says. "This allows the grandeur of the staircase to be displayed."

The entryway also makes sense from a practical standpoint. "They usually work pretty well there," Taron says. "Often homeowners choose to lighten up the entryway with a vaulted ceiling, so you already have the headroom."

Central Location

Placing stairs in the entryway is a popular choice for many homeowners, but a central placement might function better.

"Locating the staircase in the foyer often places it in an inconvenient area in relation to traffic patterns," Garnett says. "For example, if the children's bedrooms are upstairs, they typically travel to and from the kitchen/family room area on a daily basis. Forcing them to make a trip through the foyer to use the stairs may not be the best solution."

Not only does a central location take advantage of traffic flow by providing optimum accessibility to upper and lower floor rooms, it also makes practical sense. Roofs are taller toward the middle of the home. With lofted spaces, you have a natural spot for stairs where it isn't necessary to cut a hole in an upper floor to provide headroom.

"You can't just place stairs anywhere," Taron says. "You have to have a certain amount of headroom. In a typical home, you have three or four steps before you run into headroom problems." This doesn't mean you can't have stairs adjacent to a sidewall, but you may have to use an L-shape stair to angle the top portion of the stairs toward the center of the home.

Continued on Page 56

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Stair Style

Don't settle for a Plain Jane staircase if a showcase stair is really what you want. There are countless ways to step up your stair design.

1. Have a craftsman build your railing out of twisted branches for an effect that brings the natural beauty of a forest into your home.
2. Rough-sawn materials with simple lines can be a very flattering look for stairs in a log home.

1

2

3

4

5

6

3. How about a one-of-a kind artistic railing? A little flair can make your stairs the signature piece of your home.
4. Try mixing materials. Hearty log steps beautifully complement a sleek steel railing.
5. If a full-log stair isn't your cup of tea, try adding log accents to an otherwise ordinary stair system for an effect that is extraordinary.
6. Sometimes the craftsmanship of a stair becomes its defining feature. Allow the stunning craftsmanship of your stairs to show through for a style that will perfectly complement the simple beauty of your log home.
7. For a truly individual look, hire an artist to sculpt a post or railing in your staircase. Be creative. The bolder, the better!

7

Photos 1, 5, 6, 7 By Cindy Thiede; Photos 2, 3, 4 By Heidi A. Marty

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An L-shaped stair is a dramatic and functional option with a landing that provides a resting spot and a place to display art.

Continued from Page 52

Stack 'Em

Space is a major consideration when designing a stair system.

"Most people don't allow enough room for stairs," says Pete Fillion, executive director for Concept Design Institute. "Code restrictions have made it more and more difficult to fit stairs into the floor plan (regulations are calling for wider stairs and less steep stairways). Also today people are building higher ceilings and that means longer stairways."

Even if you aren't planning on a "showcase" stair system, your stairs may take up more space than you think.

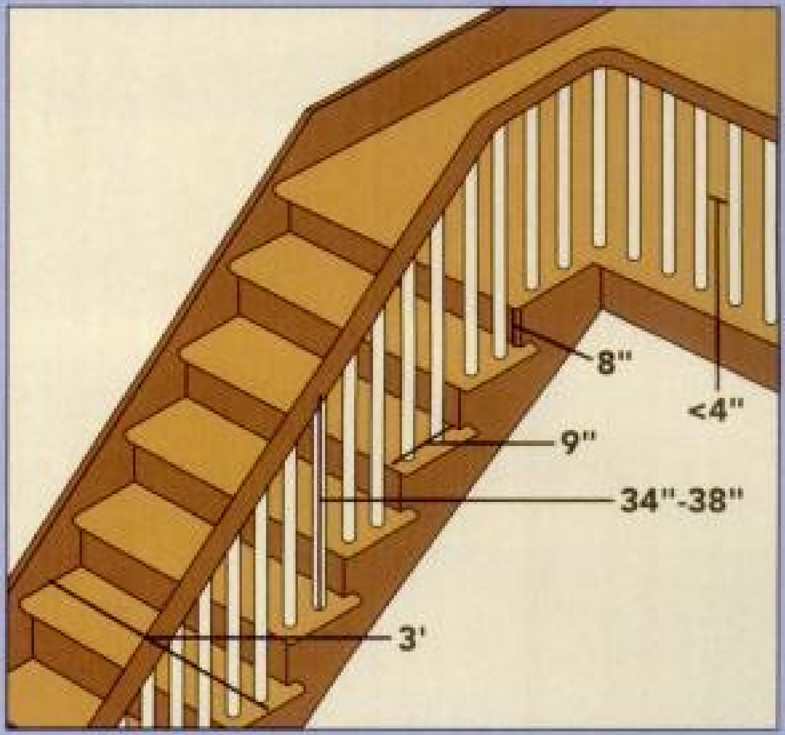
"Stairs almost invariably take up more room than what the homeowner has provided," says Jake Henry, principal draftsman for Jake's Drafting Service, Inc. "A comfortable straight run of stairs will run about 13' for a typical 9' ceiling."

The solution: stack your stairs by placing stairs to upper floors above stairs going to floors below.

"Stacked stair designs definitely are the most efficient," Garnett says. "Often, a stacked arrangement also places the stairs in the most logical location."

Greg Steckler, owner of Log Rhythms, Inc. agrees. "Stacking stairs conserves space and allows structural elements to line

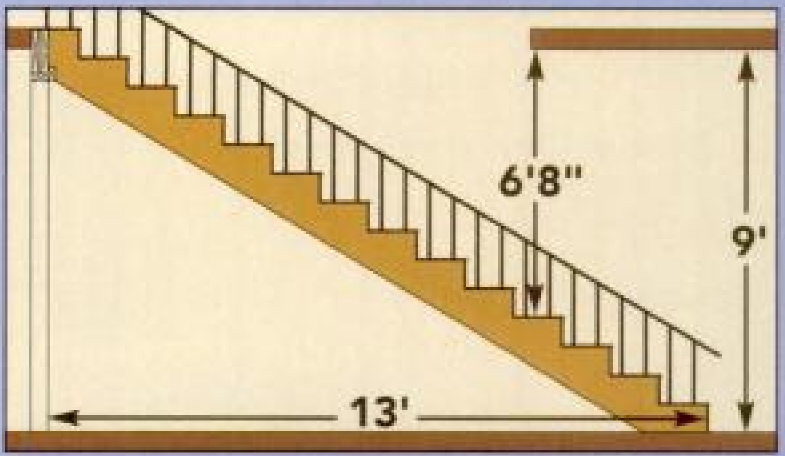
By The Numbers



To make sure your stairs comply with codes, remember these numbers:

Head clearance: 6'8" minimum
Rise of tread: 8" maximum
Run of tread: 9" minimum
Width of tread: 3' minimum
Handrail height: 34" to 38"

In addition, balusters should be close enough together to prevent passage of a 4" sphere and hand rails should be easy to grasp.



A comfortable straight run of stairs in a typical home with a 9' ceiling height will run about 13'. The space needed increases as the ceiling height increases.

Photo By Cindy Thiede

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up," he says. "It can also be very dramatic if desired."

Not stacking stairs causes inefficiencies in your floor plan. "Typically the space above and below stairs is wasted space," Henry says. "Headroom requirements dictate you lose the space on both levels above and below a set of stairs."

The Switch

What if you are using a log home company's stock floor plan — is it okay to move the stairs around?

"Why mess with a working solution?" Steckler asks. "The plan's designer has already figured everything out — structural details, square feet, beam placement, head clearance, etc."

Fillion agrees. "There's an old adage: You build a house from the bottom up, but you design it from the roof down," he says. "When you're placing stairs you have to be cognizant of roof lines and supports. People who aren't familiar with the building process aren't always aware of this."

But when all is said and done, it is your home and it should be laid out how you want it. If you have good reason to move the stairs, your designer can help you find a more appropriate arrangement. Just be aware that moving stairs could add substantial cost to your project.

"It's a domino effect," Steckler says. "Move a stair and you'll change beams and posts which increases costs and time. That's not to say it can't be done. If a plan has a stairway hidden in a closet alcove and you want to do a log spiral, then by all means, figure it out. A dramatic log spiral staircase can be the crowning focal point of a log home."

But always consider the big picture. "If you are moving stairs around, you have to be conscious of the upper level floor plan," Fillion says. "Any decision you make regarding the stairs will affect both levels."

And depending on the size of your home, switching stair placement may not be an option. "In a small house, there may be no other spot where they can go," Taron says. "In larger homes there are probably a couple spots where stairs will work, but it's usually best to leave them where they are."

Choose A Style

No matter where stairs are placed, they must function properly. If the stairs are used to access a little-used loft, a spiral staircase or ladder may be sufficient. If it is a high-traffic area in the middle of the home, a straight-run, L-shape or U-shape stair is probably better suited — especially if you plan to move large furniture up or down.

"Queen-size box springs don't fit around corners too well," Henry warns.

In homes with higher ceilings (and thus more space between floors), L-shape and U-shape runs are a good choice because they incorporate a landing. This makes them safer, and they look nice while providing a place for a reading nook or décor.

"The landing provides a resting space that serves as a break in a long climb of stairs, especially in homes with tall ceilings," Garnett says. "Additionally, an expanded landing can be a strong design element and provide an area for art placement."

Weigh your options before selecting stairs and then take the time to decide where to place them. Proper stair planning will ensure you get the best of both worlds. "The optimal stair lends to the home's beauty and it is utilitarian — it gets you where you want to go," Taron says.

RESOURCES:

Pete Fillion
Concept Design Institute
Phone: 307-721-5907
www.cdifloorplans.com

Jake Henry
Jake's Drafting service, Inc.
Phone: 970-879-7929
www.jakesdrafting.com

Rick Taron
Taron Design, Inc.
Phone: 360-966-8860
www.logdesign.com

Greg Steckler
Log Rhythms, Inc.
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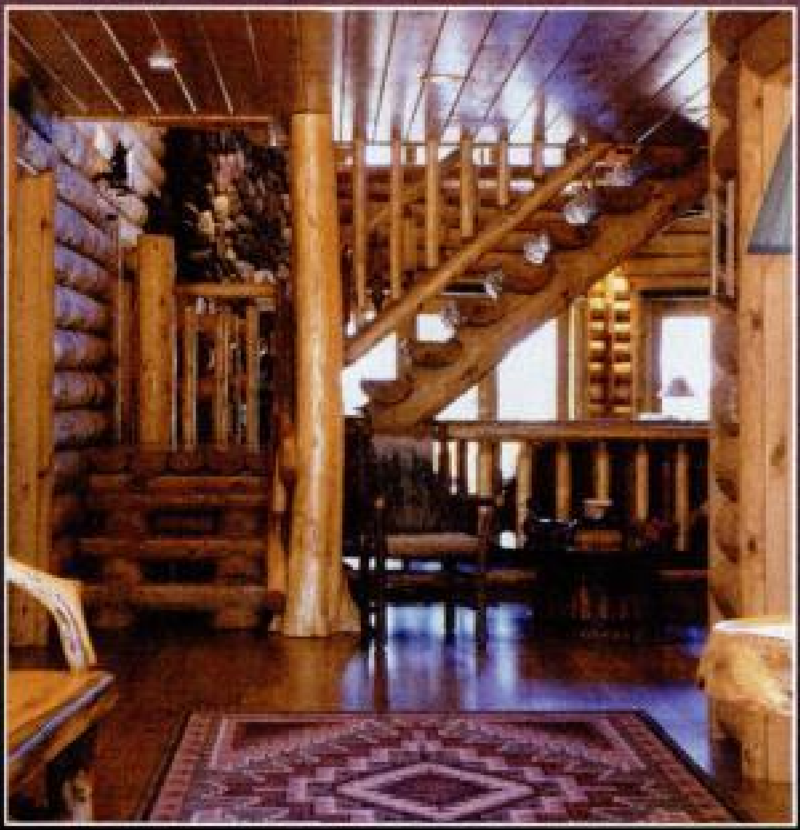

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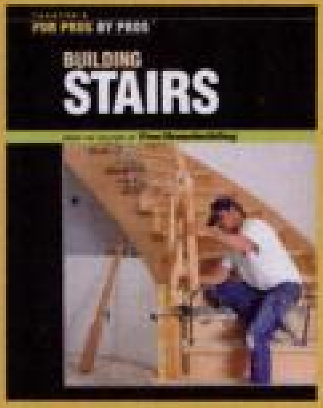

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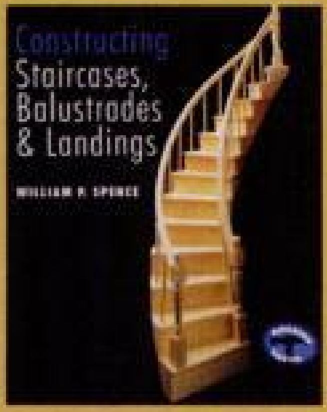

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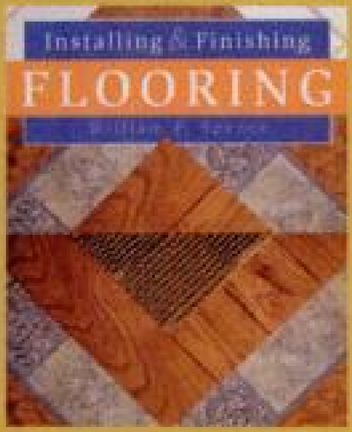

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Continued from page 28

10. What about maintenance?

Each area has specific challenges. Moore says that Florence, Colorado gets 320 days of sunshine, so log home owners have to apply finish, "a kind of sunscreen for logs," every two years. Because the area is so dry, it is especially important to trim trees and brush to make a 35-foot zone around the house which can be planted with low-growing green plants.

Security systems may or may not be useful, depending on where the home is. Volz suggests such systems are only as good as the responsiveness of the emergency services. He says an alternative is a security system that monitors temperatures. If the temperature drops below 40 degrees or rises dramatically, a service will dial your primary residence so you can call someone local to check the home. Some systems detect motion inside the building. Once alerted, you can call the police.

An alternative is a caretaker, or at least someone with a key to check plumbing or electrical work. Scher says you can offer cheap rent to a caretaker, but considers it better to pay them. "A tenant hardly ever gets any work done, despite good intentions at the beginning. Pay the caretaker, then charge rent." It's a good idea to have homeowner's insurance to cover employees and anyone working on the property.

One final question. Is a vacation home what you really want?

A second home may not make your life simpler. Two homes mean twice the cleaning and upkeep. In the long run, it might make more sense to wait until you can afford to build a larger home for your eventual retirement.

Colleen Sutherland is a freelance writer from Seymour, Wisconsin.

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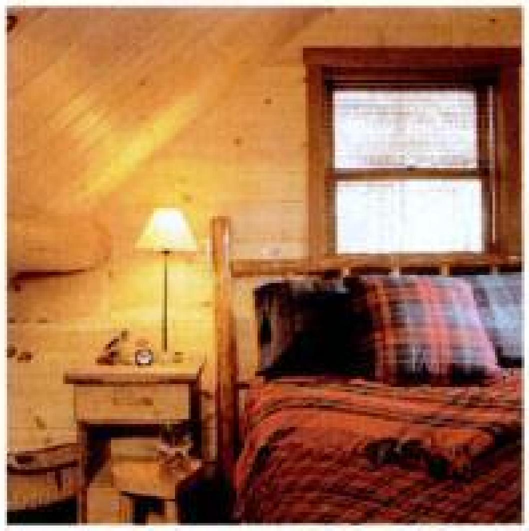

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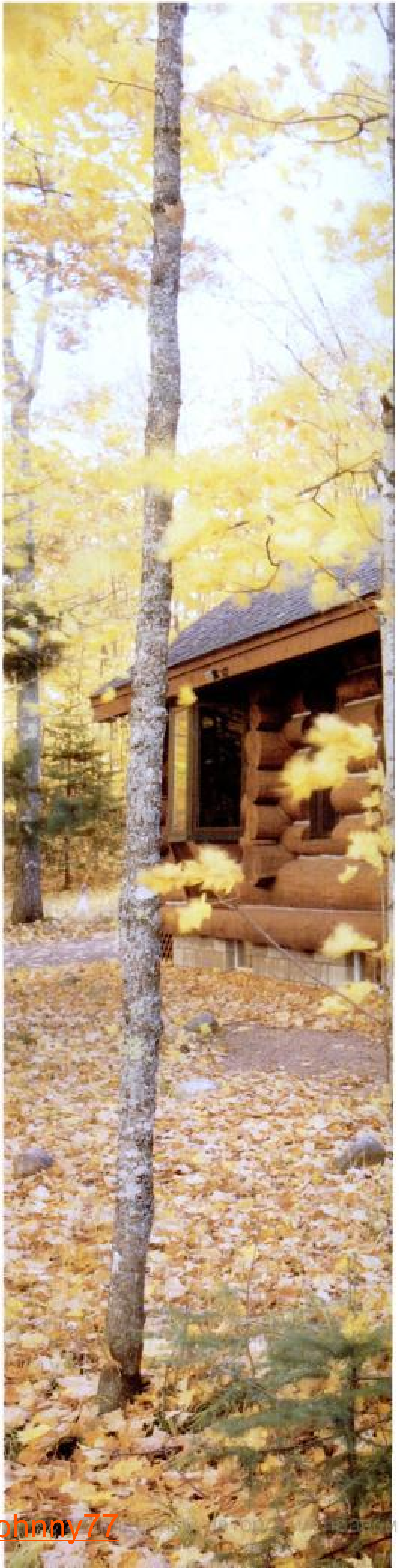
BY ANDREW WORMER



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROGER WADE • STYLING BY DEBRA GRAHL

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Sheltered by the front sleeping loft, the large front porch overlooking the lake offers a spacious area for outdoor living. Inside, the stairway leading to the finished basement is located out of the way along an exterior wall in the great room (opposite). The ponderosa pine ladder leads to the sleeping loft over the cabin's single bathroom.

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Most of the time, a trip to the post office doesn't result in the purchase of a new log home. But after his retirement from a career as a pilot for United Airlines, part of Karl Kerscher's daily routine is to take a morning run into town to pick up the mail, a trip that invariably takes him past the offices and building yard of Frontier Builders in Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin. One day, he noticed a small log cabin being assembled in the yard.

"We needed additional living space for our two sons, who had just graduated from college and who were living at home at the time," explains Karl, who along with his career as a pilot had owned and operated several Burger King franchises. "We were considering adding a dormer to our garage, but this little cabin caught my eye. I knew Jerry Wait, the owner of Frontier at the time, so I gave him a call to ask if it might be available. From there, things just seemed to fall into place."

A 'Learner' Building

As it turned out, the cabin was indeed for sale. Jerry's son Dan, at the helm of the company after his father's retirement, calls it a "learner" building.

"Every couple of years, we put one of our experienced craftsmen together with a few fellows who've been working in the yard and who have expressed interest in learning how to craft a log home," Dan explains. "Not only is this a good way to train our crews, but it utilizes surplus

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The small but functional kitchen (above) features pine cabinets, low-maintenance plastic laminate countertops and an efficient layout that offers informal breakfast bar seating. Small enough to be easily heated by the small wood stove (top), the cabinet also has supplemental electric baseboard heaters. Stored away for 20 years, the chandelier over the dining room table (opposite) came from one of the restaurants owned by Karl's father, a long-time restaurateur in Chicago. The doorway beyond leads out to a small back deck and a pathway to the main house.

materials that we have in our yard. These new workers are enthusiastic and under the supervision of an experienced builder, so the resulting structure is put together with a high degree of craftsmanship."

And as Karl discovered, the price was right. "We ended up paying less for the cabin than we probably would have spent if we had added on to the garage," he notes. "While we weren't particularly in the market for a log cabin, it really fit the northwoods style of our cedar-sided house."

Now available as the Hideaway package from Frontier, a company that's been handcrafting log homes for over 20 years, the cabin was constructed from large 15"-24" diameter handpeeled white pine logs cut in a round-notch chink style. Counting the two sleeping lofts, the cabin offers around 700 square feet of living space in a compact floor plan that features a single bath, a small combination kitchen/dining area, and a living area that feels larger than it is thanks to a vaulted ceiling. There is also a full basement, which the Kerschers finished off for additional living space and storage.

Frontier disassembled the cabin and trucked it to Karl and wife Christina's home on Lac Vieux Desert, where the family had lived for 37 years while Karl commuted to his job flying planes out of Chicago's O'Hare Airport. "We wanted to site this cabin closer to the water than the main house, and we wanted it far enough away so there would be privacy both for our boys and for ourselves. But we also didn't want it to feel too isolated," explains Karl, who subcontracted the foundation work out to a local builder. Sitting about 75 feet away from water's edge, the cabin is located about 150 feet from the main house and is connected to it by a path that wanders through the woods next to the lake.

Once Frontier reassembled the cabin and installed the roof, doors and windows, Karl contracted with neighbor Bob Pelikan, a retired shop teacher from Illinois who had helped remodel Karl and Chris's home, to do all of the finish work.

"We originally got to know Bob when he worked on our house, and over the years he's become a good friend who also helps take care of our place when we're away in the wintertime. He did a beautiful job on the cabin too," Karl says.

For Family & Friends

Because the cabin was primarily intended for use by Karl and Chris's sons while they were just getting started in their careers, the two boys helped to pay a share of the cost of building it. But changes in careers and family circumstances have relocated them to Denver and San Francisco, so visits are less frequent. As a consequence, Karl and Chris repurchased the share the boys paid for the cabin. But reminders of their bachelor days remain, including trophy hides from a bear and a coyote that decorate the walls of the cabin.

"The boys are here less often, but now they have a place they can call their own when they visit with their families," says Karl, who explains that the cabin is also used for visiting friends. "We probably use the cabin about 30 percent of the time that we're actually here in Land O'Lakes."

And while the cabin gives Karl and Chris flexibility to accommodate visiting family and friends, it also offers them options as their retirement plans change.

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The cabin has a simple footprint that could easily be expanded, and it's located so a separate lot could be subdivided, making it possible for Karl and Chris to sell the larger house and move into the cabin.

"We both like to travel to warmer climates in the wintertime," Karl explains. "We've considered the possibility of making the cabin a little bit larger by adding a couple of extensions, and then putting our other house on the market. But for now we don't have any firm plans."

Meanwhile, Karl and Chris remain busy in their retirement. While the Burger King franchises have been sold, Karl remains active in aviation, serving as chairman of the local airport commission and working on his current project, a Cessna 172 airplane on floats. He and Chris escape the long Wisconsin winters by heading to warmer climates where they visit their sons or explore new locales. But every spring, they return to the woods and lakes of northern Wisconsin, a home they've enjoyed for nearly 40 years and a cabin they plan to enjoy for a long time to come.

Andrew Wormer is a contributing editor with Fine Homebuilding magazine and the author of The Bathroom Idea Book and The Builder's Book of Bathrooms (Taunton Press).

RESOURCES:

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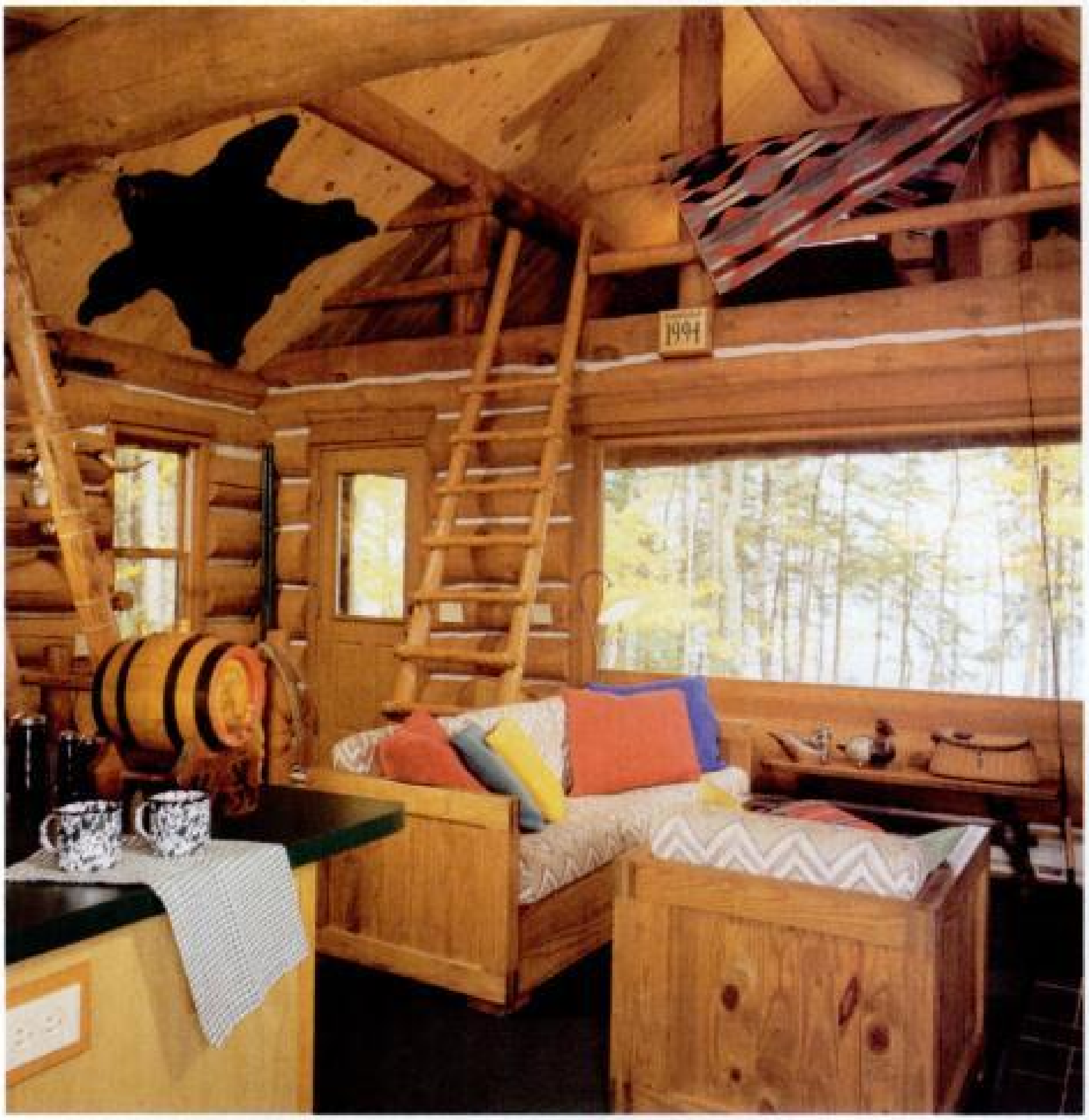
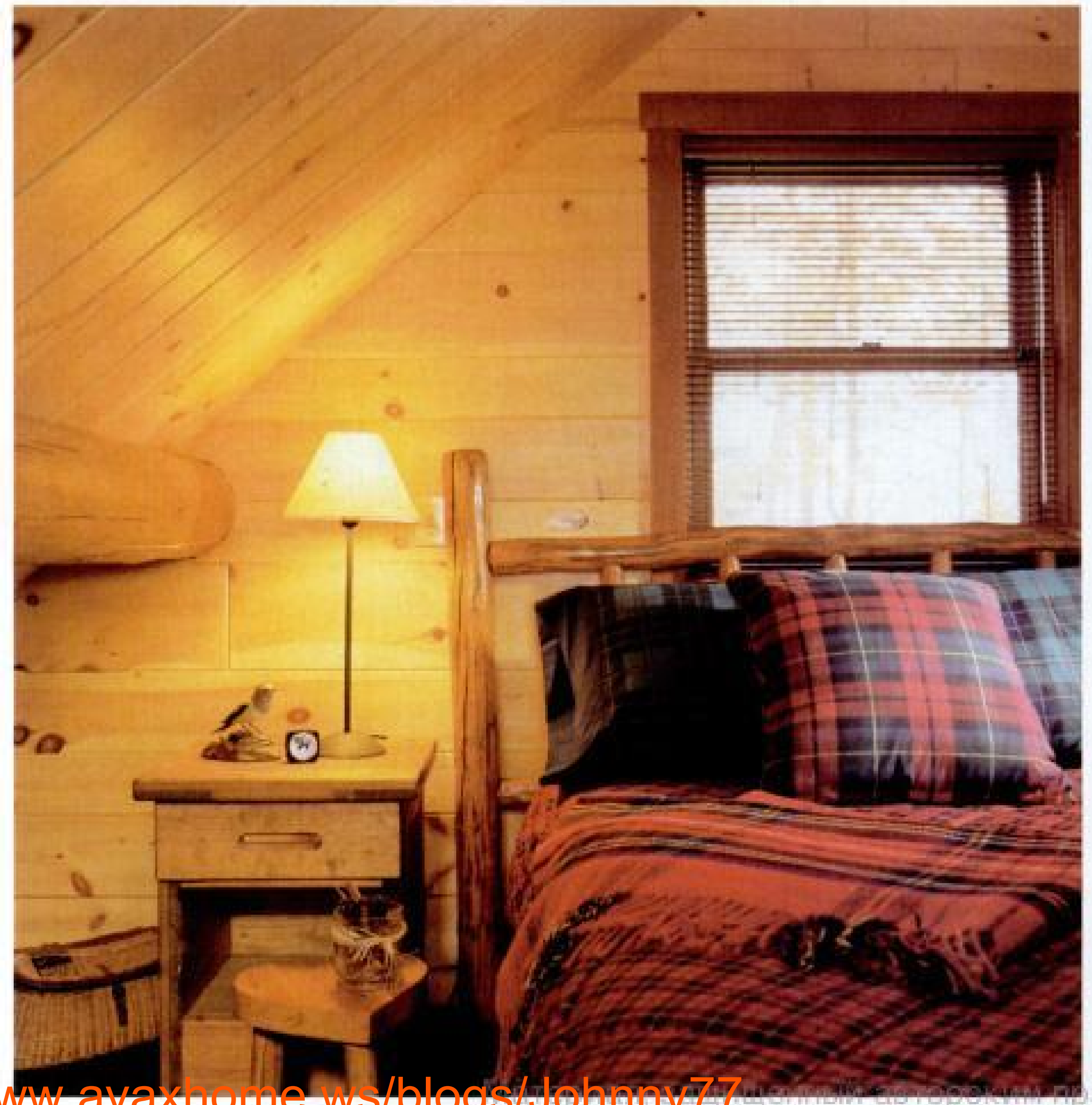
Frontier Builders, Inc.
P.O. Box 389
Land O' Lakes, WI 54540
Phone: 800-752-5501, 715-547-6222
frontier@fbiloghomes.com





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A trophy bearskin (opposite top) shot by one of the Kerschers' sons is a reminder of the time when the cabin served as the ultimate northwoods bachelor pad. The ladder was crafted by neighbor Bob Pelikan and leads to the sleeping loft over the front porch. Small but cozy, the sleeping loft (opposite bottom) overlooking the lake has room for a queen bed, while additional floor space under the eaves can accommodate cots and sleeping bags. Like the queen-sized bed in the front sleeping loft (left), the twin beds in the sleeping loft over the kitchen have headboards crafted by Karl Kerscher and his neighbor out of lodgepole pine from Wyoming.

Big Living in a Small Cabin

Measuring a little less than 24'x 36', the Kerschers' Wisconsin lakeside cabin manages to pack a lot of useable living area within its compact rectangular footprint. Here are five space-saving strategies employed in its design:

1. Create sleeping lofts instead of separate bedrooms. While the compromised privacy may not work for everyone, this solution offers ample room for two twin beds (in one loft) and a queen-sized bed (in the other loft), as well as space under the eaves for extra sleeping bags and cots. Families on vacation won't mind the closer-than-normal quarters.

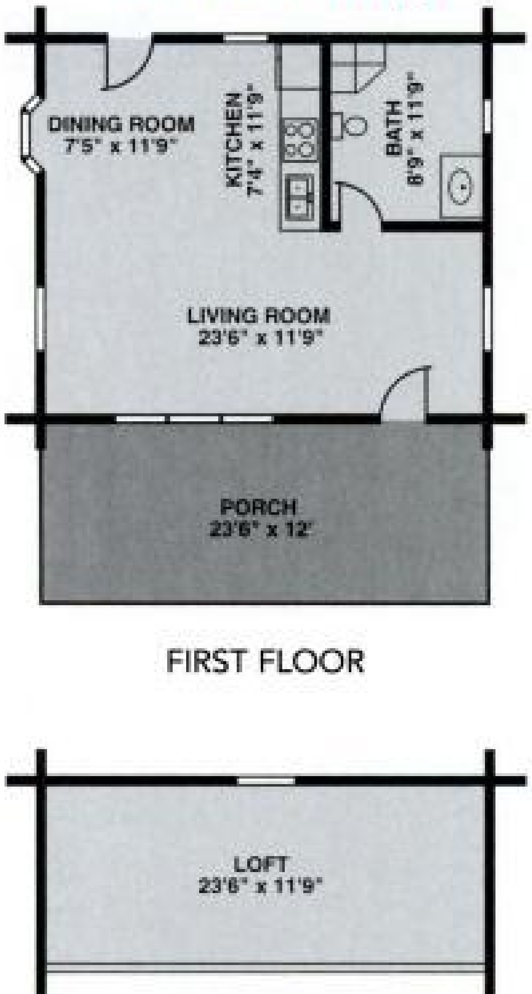
2. Use ladders instead of staircases. Again, this isn't an ideal solution for full-time use, but ladders are novel — perfect for vacation time — and don't take up as much floor space as a full-blown staircase.

3. Use an L-shaped kitchen. Locating cabinetry and appliances along the edge of a larger space allows the floor area to do double duty, keeps sight lines open and maximizes the kitchen's efficiency. This kitchen doesn't have a lot of cabinetry, but has more than enough to stock the supplies for visiting family and guests.

4. Build on a full basement. Even if the basement isn't used for living space, it offers room for utilities and storage that would otherwise clutter the living area. The Kerschers' is safely and easily accessed by a full staircase.

5. Don't skimp on porches. This cabin has both a rear entry and a generously-sized 12'x 24' covered front porch that creates a much-appreciated "outdoor room" during the warmer months when the cabin is most often used.

The Hideaway



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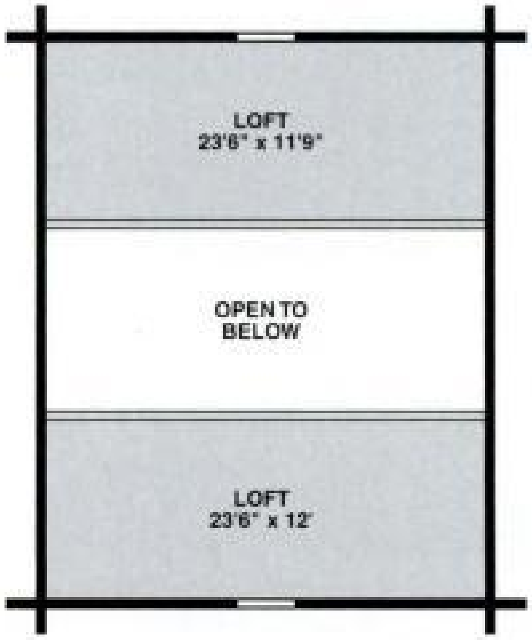

SECOND FLOOR

Floor Plan Courtesy Frontier Builders, Inc.

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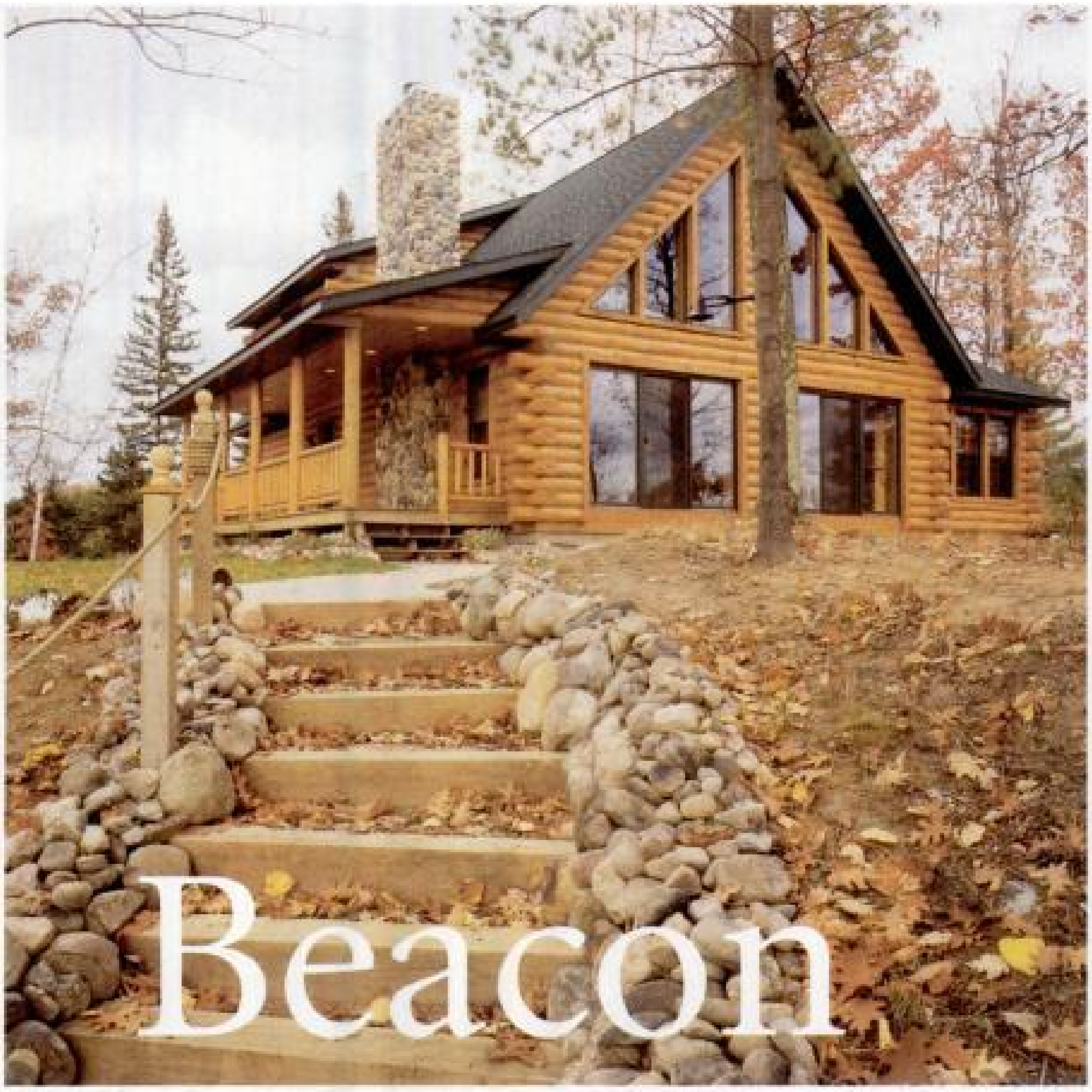

Beacon on a Hill

Perched on a lakeside knoll in Wisconsin's northwoods, an Illinois couple's log retreat sparkles with light

BY PETER LINDBLAD

PHOTOS BY ROGER WADE • STYLING BY DEBRA GRAHL

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A brick pathway joins a fieldstone lined walkway that leads to Pokegama Lake at Gary and Jean Baert's Wisconsin log home (opposite). A series of trapezoid windows and two 9'x7' patio doors give the Baerts a panoramic view of the lake. A vaulted ceiling and nine 5' double-hung windows give the sunroom an open feeling.

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Patio doors give the Baerts quick, easy access to the lake and let in a generous amount of natural light. Gary installed the 3¼" pre-finished hardwood floors that cover most of the floor, they provide nice contrast to the knotty pine walls.

Gary and Jean Baert didn't see a need to look any further. It was love at first sight when they saw the Golden Eagle Log Homes model in Minocqua, Wisconsin. They decided right then and there that they wanted to use the design for their own northwoods lakeside retreat.

"We had purchased a lot up there a couple of years before and my daughter and I were driving out of town and we saw that Golden Eagle was building a model, so we stopped in," Gary says. "It had everything we were looking for in a house."

Well, almost everything. The Baerts wanted to add a sunroom and a long covered porch so they could sit and look out on Pokegama Lake. It's a terrific view, and so is the home itself.

"It sits on top of a knoll and it's got beautiful views down to the water," says John Batzer, director of dealer development for Golden Eagle. "I took a walk down to the lake and looked up and the home looked like a beacon on a hill."

Heading North

Going up north has become a rite of summer for the Baert family. Minocqua has been their destination since the mid-1980s. Friends who had property there since 1973 convinced them to see what the area had to offer, and it was a tip from one of them that helped the Baerts find their own piece of land.

"It's out on a peninsula," Gary says. "It's very private. There are only two other homes out there. We had looked and looked and looked, and then a friend told us about this place. We both fell in love with it."

The water was the main draw. "It's on a chain of lakes and the land is heavily wooded," Gary says. "The home sits on a hill about 30' above the lake and we can look out over the water and see several islands."

Another reason Gary and Jean liked the property so much: the generous southern exposure it offered.

"We picked the lot because it faces south," Gary says. "That was my wife's primary concern, that everything faced south so we'd get sunlight during the day."

The Eagle Has Landed

It took a long time for the Baerts to find property they liked. Choosing a floor plan wasn't nearly as hard.

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The kitchen, dining area and great room are all part of the main floor's open design, where generous glazing brings in a lot of light. To make their retreat as bright as possible, the Baerts installed canned lighting in the kitchen, which features a breakfast bar. "It's nice for sitting and having breakfast and looking out over the lake," Gary says. "It's nice that you can be in the kitchen and still see the water."

Inside the split-log wall that holds the great room glazing is a structural column that runs from the peak to the floor. The column, along with headers above the windows and split log dividers, helps support the generous wall of windows.

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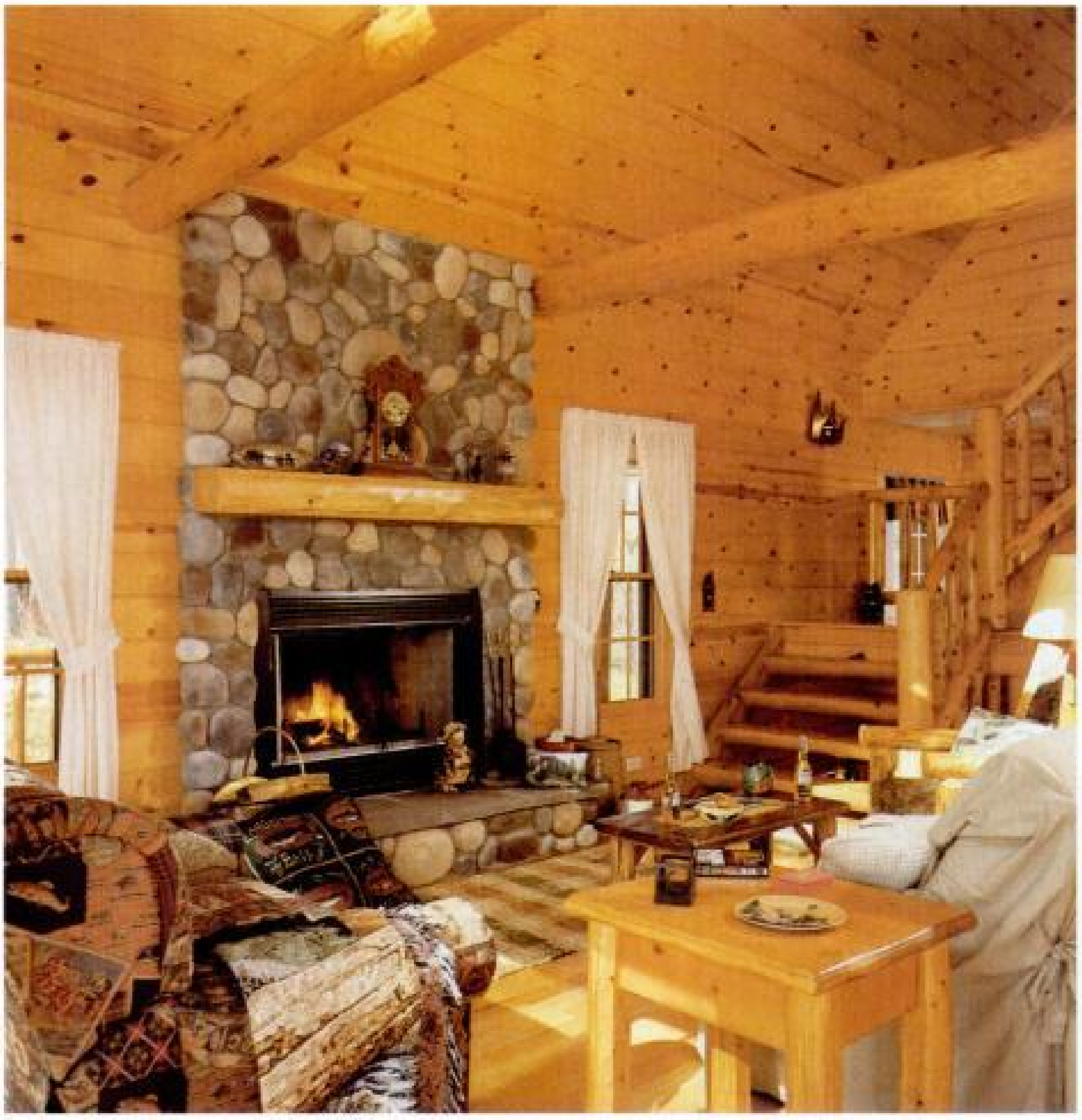

The Baerts wanted a first-floor master bedroom (above). They chose drywall to provide contrast to the knotty pine walls found elsewhere in the home, like the living room (left). "I like the transition from wood to drywall and the brightness it gives the room," Gary says. "We figured if we had too much wood it would darken the place up." The focal point of the living room is the woodburning Heatilator fireplace. Forced air heat helps provide "... a good temperature balance in the home, and the whole structure," Gary says.

"What I liked about the Minocqua model was that it had a first floor laundry," Gary says. "We didn't see that in a lot of log home floor plans. They might have offered it, but Golden Eagle's model presented it to me so I could see it. The model had what I was looking for, so I had my mind set on it. I told my wife, 'Honey, you've got to see this house. It's exactly what we want,' and she agreed."

The Baerts' home is a combination of two Golden Eagle floor plans.

"The lower level is basically the Northern Eagle and the lofted area is the Pine View model," Batzer says. "They took two floor plans because they needed more bedrooms upstairs."

There's a lot to like about the home.

"The great thing about the Northern Eagle is it's got a lot of glass," Batzer says. "It's got a first floor master bedroom, a nice master bath and a walk-in closet for a nice sized master bedroom suite. The Pine View gives the second floor two bedrooms, one bath and a nice loft that's kind of a balcony that looks down over the great room."

Adding the sunroom, the covered porch and a log staircase inside only enhanced what was already there.

"The sunroom was a huge consideration," Gary says. "It's a nice area to converse and relax."

Hill To Climb

After seeing Golden Eagle's Minocqua model, the Baerts were set on the design of their home. Choosing a log producer was almost as easy.

"We looked at several other log home companies, but to be honest with you, they were priced too high," Gary says. "Golden Eagle had a lot to offer for a fair price."

And since Coffen Construction, a Golden Eagle dealer, was building the model, it was only natural the Baerts would choose Coffen to build their home.

"I met them when they came through the model," says Robin Coffen, project manager for Coffen Construction. "They came to me after they had the property and we talked about the design of the home and if it would fit on the property. We did a site visit. It was a complicated lot."

The steepness of the slopes on both sides of the building site gave Coffen cause for concern. The first challenge: getting materials, including the logs, up the driveway to the job site. "Trucks had to stop halfway and then we had to carry them up the hill manually," Robin explains. "We had a Bobcat that we used to lift materials and we brought in a crane for the log collar ties."

Then they had to figure out how to gain entrance to the house, not just by foot but also with the drive-under garage. The snow and ice of a Wisconsin winter create a slippery driveway slope, and heavy rains could wash away an unpaved road. The Baerts solved the problem by paving the driveway.

"It's a steep approach to the garage," Coffen says. "We ended up putting up a 10' basement wall because we needed as much depth as we could get with the foundation area to get the main floor on top of the hill."

The hill also made it tricky to install a well and septic system that meets Wisconsin law.

"We trimmed off a flat area that was big enough for a drainfield," Robin says. "It's tricky when you have a hill. There's basically only one area it can go."

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The trapezoid windows that give the loft area great views of the lake weren't included in Golden Eagle's original package. Gary says the window shapes blend in well with the northwoods exterior.

And that area where the house was going to be built was fairly small. "I wasn't entirely sure we could do it until we staked out the footprint and established the elevations to see where the main floor would fit on the hill itself," Robin says. "We thought it might be too small for the house, the driveway and the septic system. We couldn't have put a house any bigger than that on it."

Easy To Maintain

Gary and Jean didn't want a vacation home that required a lot of upkeep. That's why they went with Golden Eagle's 8" hand-peeled split log system.

"We wanted to avoid a lot of maintenance," Gary says. "We put in a lot of overhangs to help keep the logs dry from precipitation and the soffit fascia was all done with aluminum so there's very little maintenance. All we do is wash the windows and seal the home every five years, which was a recommendation from Golden Eagle."

It was also important to have an energy-efficient home, which Golden Eagle's split-log construction provides. The 2x6 construction allowed for R-19 insulation to be installed between the studs in the wall; then it was wrapped with Tyvek to provide an additional barrier to wind and moisture. "It's a very tight home," Gary says.

Total Exposure

Almost every room in the home has a view of the lake, from the bedrooms and dining room to the loft, living area and kitchen.

"For windows on the south side we have two 9'x7' patio doors and the sunroom has full-length windows," Gary says. "It's a very bright house. It doesn't feel enclosed. It feels bright and airy and it's very open. The living room, kitchen, dining room and sunroom all kind of blend together."

The first floor living space provides that open feel the Baerts were looking for. The main floor also has hardwood flooring everywhere — except the bath — that Gary installed himself.

"I shopped around for flooring prices and much to my dismay they were quite expensive," he says. "So I called Robin and he found a place in Minnesota to provide the flooring."

Retirement Plans

Someday, the Baerts' Minocqua retreat will most likely be the couple's summer retirement home. That day can't come soon enough for Gary.

"It's not our primary home, but I wish it was," he says.

SOURCES:

Golden Eagle Log Homes
4421 Plover Rd.
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
Phone: 800-270-5025
www.golden-eagle-log-homes.com

Coffen Construction
7563 Hwy. 51 S.
Minocqua, WI 54548
Phone: 715-356-3302
www.coffenconstruction.com

CrestLine Windows and Doors
Phone: 715-693-7000
www.crestlinewindows.com

Sashco
Phone: 800-767-5656
www.sashco.com

Therma-Tru Corp.
Phone: 800-843-7628
www.thermatru.com

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Golden Eagle Log Homes suggested installing an open log staircase to connect the upper and lower floors. "It opens things up and makes the great room feel bigger," says Golden Eagle Log Homes director of development John Batzer.

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Just Like Home

Gary and Jean built their log home with an eye to the future. For now, it's simply a north-woods retreat, but someday they hope to make it their summer retirement home and they'll spend the winter in warmer climates.

In that way, they're not much different from many of their Minocqua, Wisconsin neighbors.

"That house is normal for that market," says John Batzer, director of dealer development for Golden Eagle Log Homes. "The majority of homes in that area start out as seasonal homes but are intended to be places to retire to."

Batzer says that in recreational areas like Minocqua people are tearing down old cottages to build houses like the one built by the Baerts. They want all the conveniences of home, like a first-floor washer and dryer, a dishwasher and space for guests.

"It's important to them to have bunking areas and more places to entertain, like the sunroom the Baerts have," he says.

Robin Coffen of Coffen Construction agrees. "People like to have their creature comforts like air conditioning, washer-dryer hookups and a dishwasher," he says. "They have a lot of mid- to higher-end appliances, just like they have at home. They might only cook one or two meals while they're up there, but they want to do it with all the conveniences."

It's also important to make the home easy to heat. "That's why the [well-insulated] split-log system is so nice," Robin says. "People like to be able to just click on the furnace when they get there, throw a log on the fire and have it be toasty warm before they go to bed. That type of home heats up fast."

Gary has some advice for people thinking of doing what he and Jean did.

"Keep closet space in mind, have a first-floor laundry and don't forget about appliances," he says. "The last thing people think about is a dishwasher, but it's so nice to be able to pop the dishes in there and then go out and enjoy things, like fishing. Make sure the home is big enough. And think outside the box. Do things like putting the master bedroom on the first floor. People ask us all the time why we did that. We didn't want to be climbing up the stairs to go to bed when we're older."

One of two spacious upstairs bedrooms, this one is the daughter's room and it features two log beds and folding doors that open to a good-sized closet. The upstairs bath divides the bedrooms.

Gary & Jean's Floor Plan

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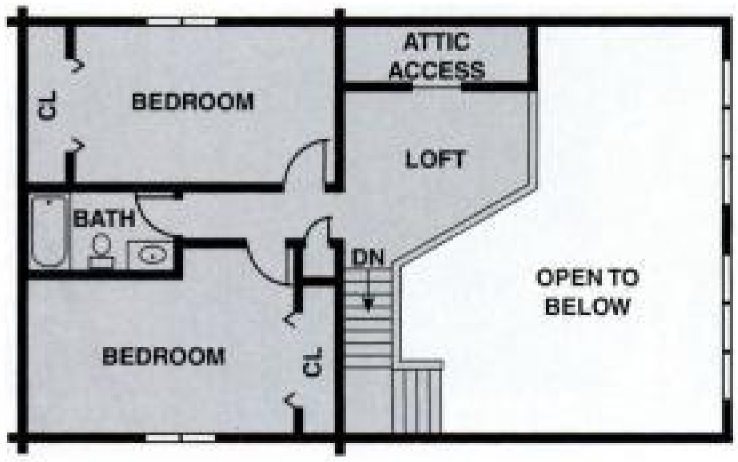

SECOND FLOOR

Floor Plans Courtesy Golden Eagle Log Homes

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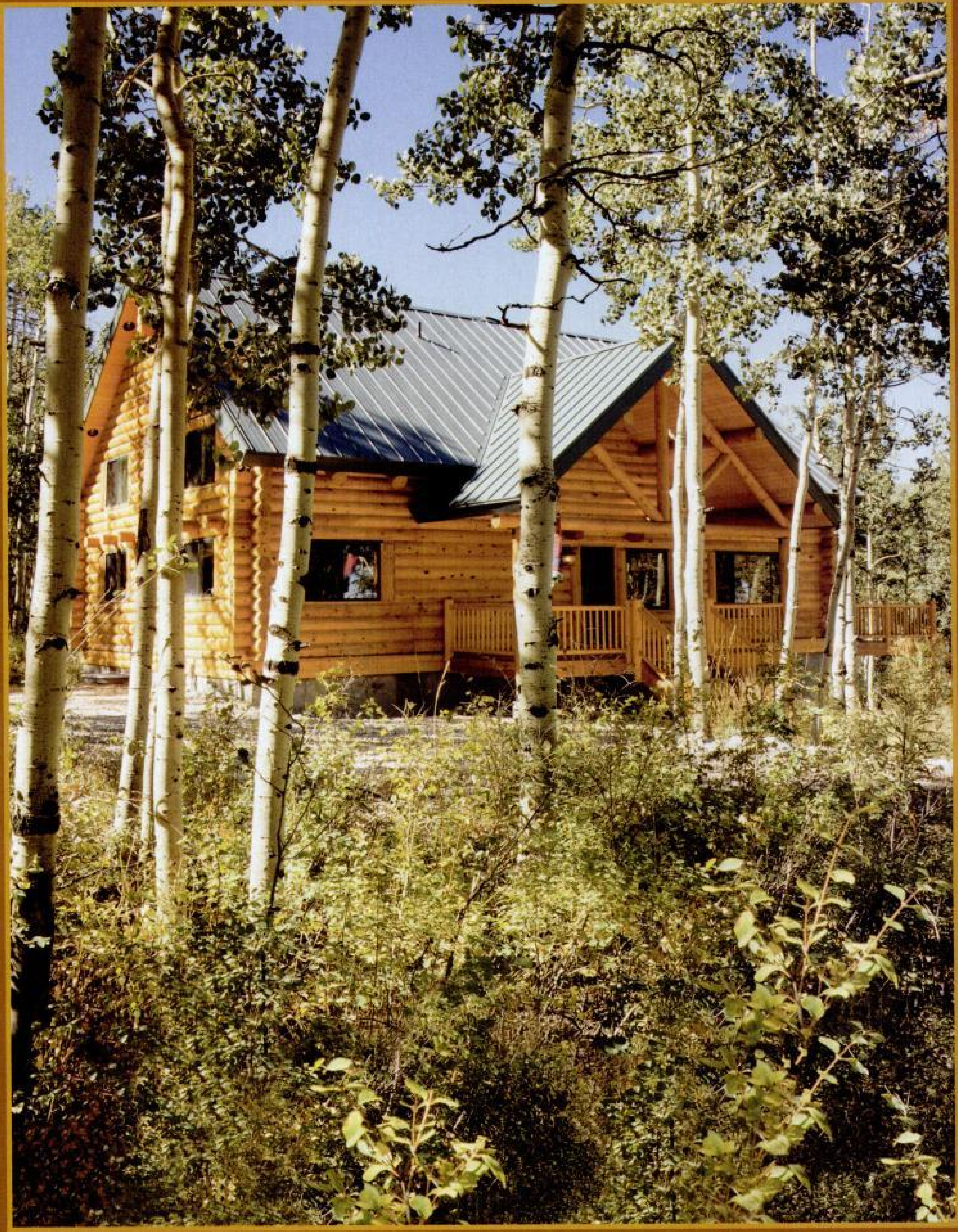

BY IYNA BORT CARUSO | PHOTOS BY ROGER WADE | STYLING BY DEBRA GRAHL

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"...it's a fairly *small home,* but the way it's designed makes *excellent use* of every inch of space."

In the great room, 500-watt halogen flood lights, set on a dimmer between each of the beams, cast a warm glow off the ceiling.

Maximizing Your Second Home Investment

The Folsom family had a sixth sense about their second home. They knew what they wanted in a weekend retreat, where they wanted it and how they'd have to build it to maximize the investment. And it all fell into place.

While not everyone has the luxury to be within commuting distance of a resort area, Doug says proximity to his primary residence makes overnight excursions to his log home easy and spontaneous. The homes are just over an hour's drive apart.

"You don't need to do a lot of advanced planning," he says. "You can go at the drop of a hat."

Doug suggests second homes be as self sufficient as possible. Pots and pans, washer and dryer — all the comforts of home — make it low maintenance. "If it's too much work, you don't go," he says.

Choose furniture that's casual and comfortable, he adds. If it gets scratched, you won't fret.

Another tip: employ smart-home technology. The Folsoms cannot only access their security system remotely through their telephone, they can also access their furnace through the same system. Doug says it takes eight hours for his vacation home to warm up from 47 to 70 degrees in the winter. Remote access to his heating unit means the family always walks into a warm, toasty and inviting home.

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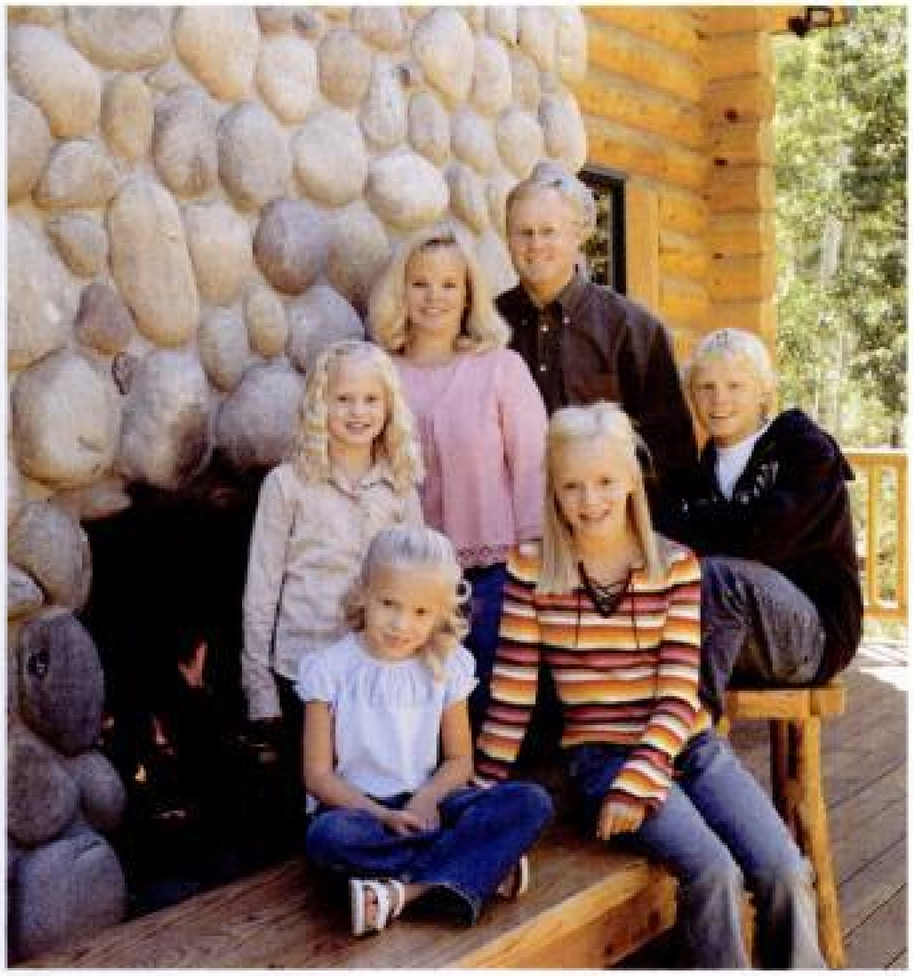
The Great Escape

A second home close to home, this cabin boasts an efficient floor plan that allows its owners to get all they can from their city escape

The difference between stress and sanctuary is measured in mileage for the Folsom family of Utah. Forty-five miles to be exact. That's the distance from their primary residence in the Salt Lake City suburb of North Salt Lake to their log home getaway in Heber City, adjacent to Park City high in the Wasatch Mountains.

Doug, Teresa and their four children spend a couple weekends a month at their four-bedroom, four-bath cabin. Doug says the change of scenery brings the family closer together and allows them to dodge the "pressures and routine of normal home life."

The custom-built 2,200 square foot home is set on a hillside on a one-acre parcel in a vacation area where log homes dominate. The Folsoms' retreat has a full basement with a game room, a second-story loft and a two-car garage. The logs are 10" ponderosa pine, premium graded to ensure maximum structural integrity. Doug, a Utah native, always knew he wanted an authentic all-log home, a hankering that harkens back to boyhood.



"My grandparents had a log cabin not far from here and we grew up spending the summers there," he explains.

Ask Doug about the architectural style of his home and he confesses, "I have no idea." The layout was the result of a collaborative effort with his brother, Paul, and sprang from need and imagination.

More House, Less Space

Doug spent about six months heavily researching floor plans and driving around neighborhoods to scout out different log home layouts and styles, but says he "couldn't find one that had all the assets we wanted." He and Teresa wanted four bedrooms, which was difficult to come by in a home of limited size. In addition, the couple sought big open areas for entertaining, so a spacious kitchen and roomy family room were musts.

In the final design, they compromised by sacrificing some square footage in the bedrooms for the good of the common areas. Another consideration? Snow. Accumulations upwards of eight feet are not uncommon here. As a result, the roof was designed to take a 135-pound live load.

"The roof lines had to accommodate a heavy amount of snow without creating ice dam problems," Doug explains. He says he saw rooflines that were intricate, detailed and smart looking, but given the snow-belt conditions would have caused major ice problems. In the end he selected a steep metal roof that allows the snow to slide right off rather than pile up.

"In the upstairs bedroom you can see how steep the roof line is," he points out.

The roof is supported by heavy 12" Douglas fir logs. The way it's structured, the snow lands away from the cabin, not right against it. "You don't want the snow against the log. It worked out great," Doug says.

This vacation home not only offers the Folsom family — including Doug, Teresa and their four children — R&R but easy access to the ski slopes. The deck, with its stone fireplace, picnic table and hammock, serves as an extra family room in season.

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The Folsom home is situated at an 8,000-foot elevation, perfectly positioned for a favorite family activity: star-gazing.

From Idea To Implementation

When it came to log manufacturers, Doug and his brother Paul visited three different manufacturing plants to see the process firsthand. The Meridian, Idaho, facilities of Precision Craft Log and Timber Homes was one of them and the pair liked what they saw. Doug went with Precision Craft because he was impressed with their "soup-to-nuts approach."

Ryan Archibald, regional sales manager for Precision Craft, says the process customers like the Folsoms go through is a common one. "They have a conceptual design on paper and bring the idea to the company's in-house design team. The designers, in turn, make any adjustments the homeowner deems necessary and do whatever it takes in the final construction drawings to assure structural stability," he says.

Bill Palm, design manager at Precision Craft, worked with the Folsoms to "fine tune their design until they were happy with what we drew. We accommodated their styles and preferences, and at the same time made sure it met all codes."

The Folsom home features round double tongue-and-groove, kiln-dried timber, which is not only a popular choice for its traditional look but also for the added security it provides. The interlocking system runs the entire length of the log wall, creating an airtight seal as well as added wall strength.

Thru-bolt construction was another important feature offered by Precision Craft. The system keeps the walls true and helps pre-settle them as the logs are stacked. A 1,000-pound tension spring on the top of each all-thread thru-bolt helps to maintain constant, even pressure and a tight seal around the entire structure. No chinking or caulking is necessary.

All of the structural members in Doug and Teresa's home are manufactured out of Douglas fir. "It's the strongest softwood and that's why we use it in the log floor joists, vertical posts and rafters," Archibald explains.

Doug, a financial officer for an advertising agency, and Paul,

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Doug says the home is "perfect for our lifestyle. It's a huge *respite* for me."

Sliding windows maximize cool mountain breezes. "The air is very crisp and very fresh, and we wanted to get a nice draft throughout the house," Doug says.

president of Paul Folsom Construction, self-contracted the home. It took about eight months to complete and Doug says he relied heavily on his brother's expertise. The Folsoms' primary home was a built-from-scratch stone-and-stucco rambler, but this was Doug's first log-building experience. He says building his weekend home called for a very different approach.

"Log requires more advanced planning," he says. For starters, the family didn't want plumbing or wiring exposed when the subfloor was put down. Consequently, it was necessary to preplan where every light switch and outlet would be placed because wires had to be run at the same time the logs were stacked. "You have no freedom to make changes like you do in a normal home," Doug says. "With logs, you can't change a wall. It's all engineered from the start."

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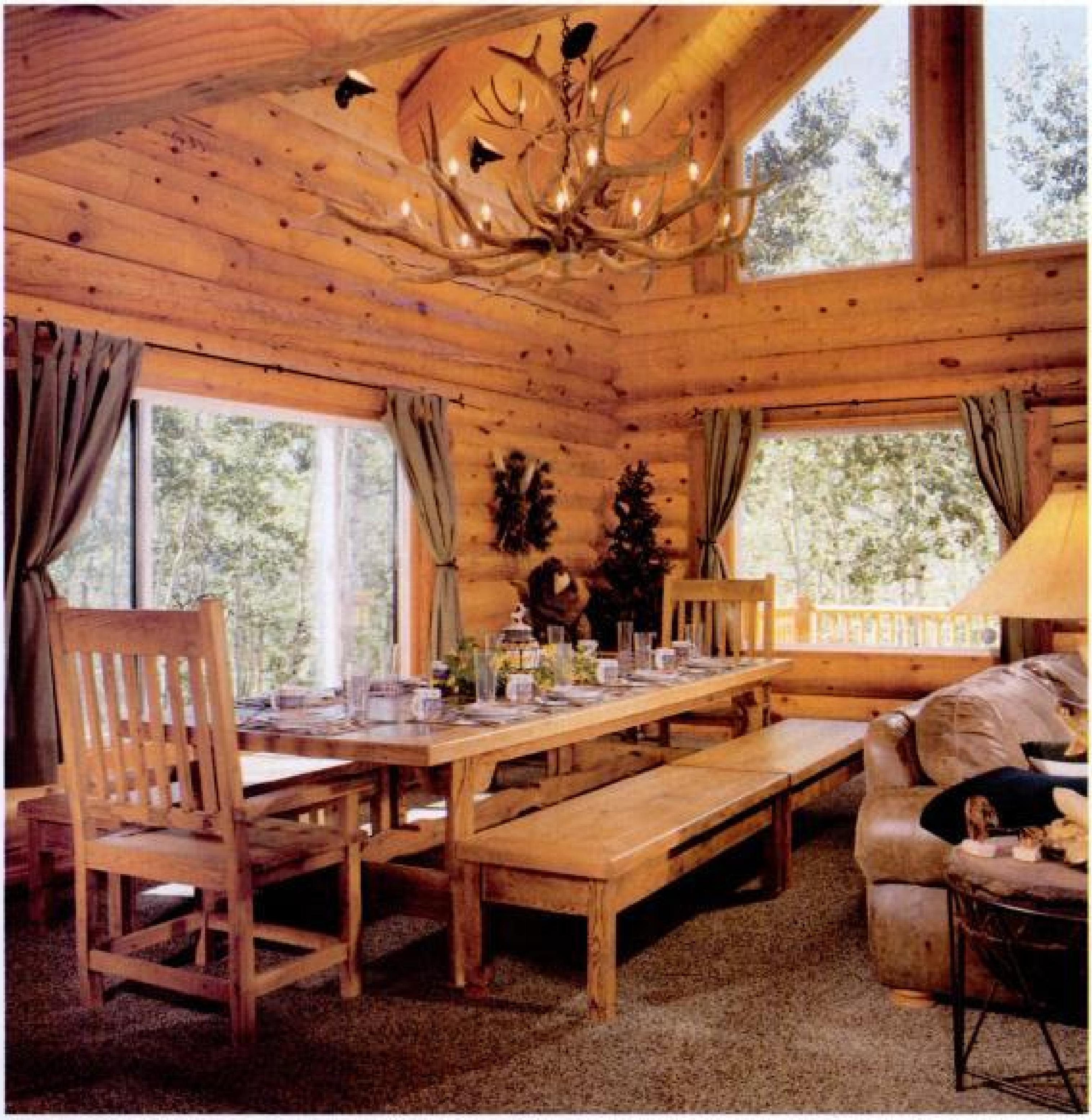

The dining room (above) looks out onto heavily foliaged quaking aspen and pines native to Utah. The chandelier features elk antlers on the bottom and deer antlers on the top. The oak dining room table is custom-made and seats 16.

The kitchen (left) features custom-made cabinetry with a natural finish; the countertop is Formica.

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Simple Yet Memorable

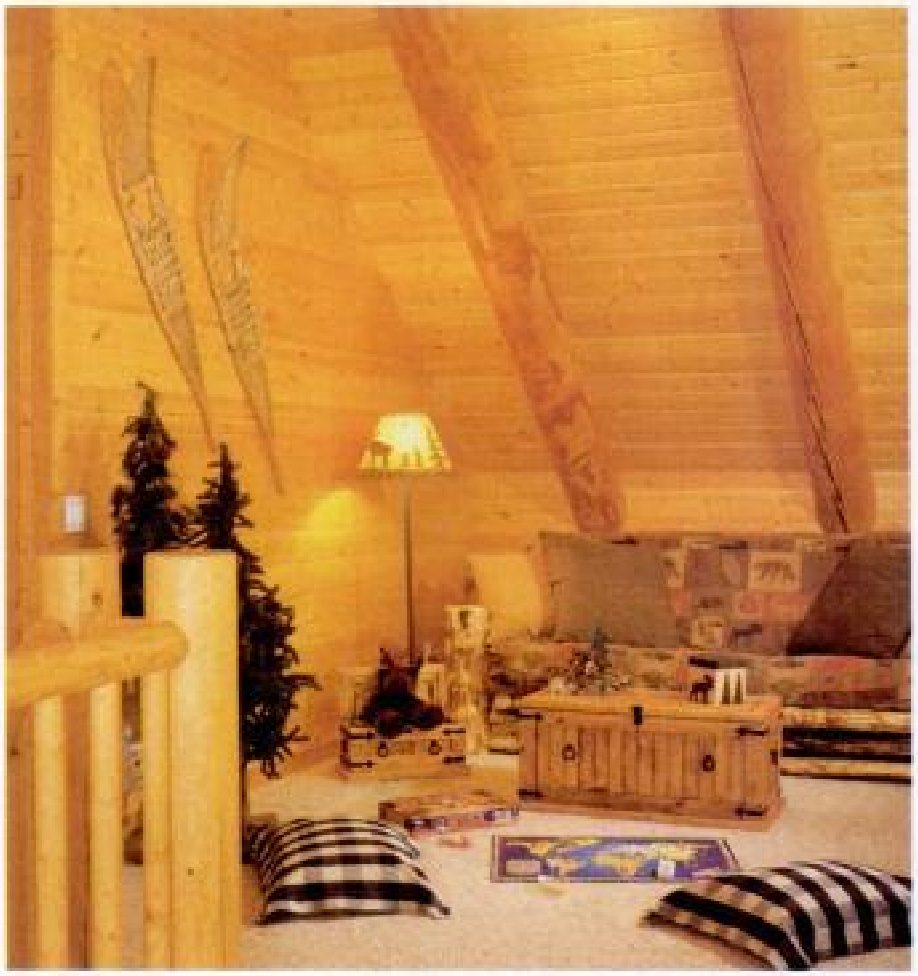
Precision Craft's Ryan Archibald says, "The thing about this home that was always pretty impressive to me was that it's a fairly small home, but the way it's designed makes excellent use of every inch of space."

The kitchen and dining areas both open onto the great room, which is dominated by a huge river rock fireplace of stones taken from the surrounding area. The Folsoms opted for a gas log unit.

"We didn't want the inside of the cabin to ever get that smoky smell," Doug says. "Plus, you can just press a button to turn it on or off and not worry about the ashes." The gas fireplace also provides heat for the entire home.

The fireplace is striking for another reason. It's two-sided, also opening up to a wood-burning unit on the deck, which is accessible off the great room. According to Archibald, "the Folsoms took an extremely simple design and with a few unique features made the home really memorable. The double-sided masonry fireplace is really impressive. Everyone gets really excited when they see it."

The chimney is 24 feet high and was built with 17 tons of indigenous rock. Doug credits his wife, Teresa, with the idea,



The loft (above right) is utilized as a playroom for the Folsoms' four children. The beams are made of strong, rose-hued Douglas fir.

Despite the steep angle of the roof, Doug says there's plenty of room in son Blake's bedroom (right). No ducking involved. Each of the four bedrooms has its own bath.

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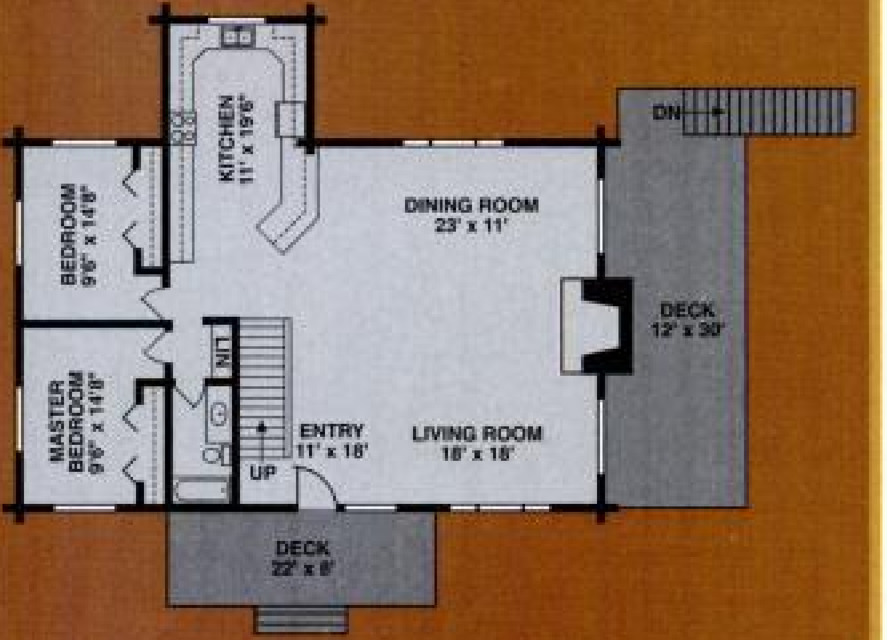
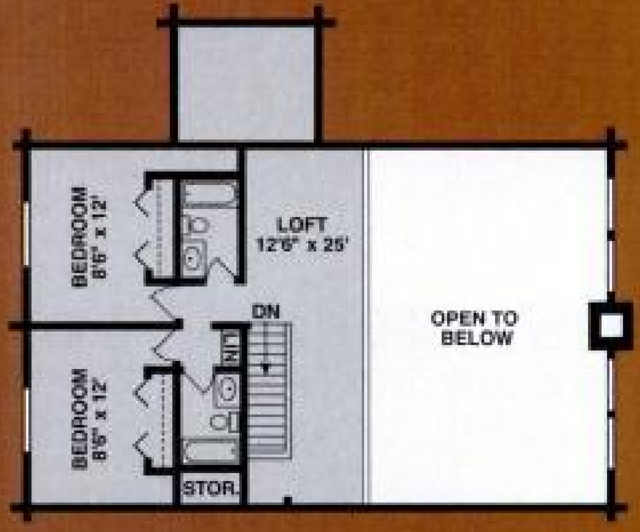
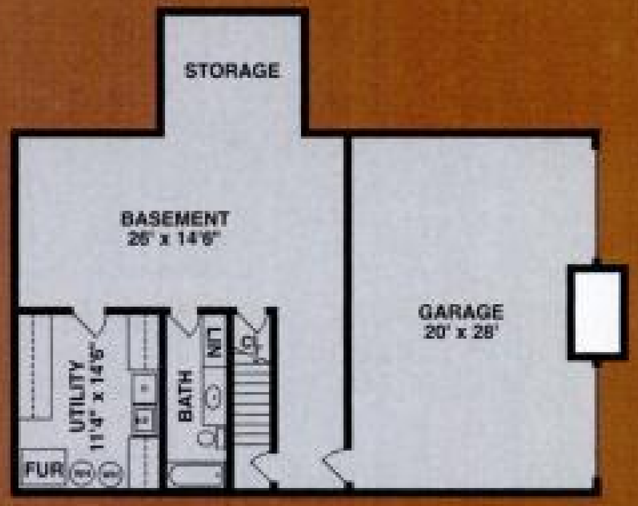
Doug & Teresa's Floor Plan



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



GARAGE

Floor Plan Courtesy Precision Craft Log & Timber Hoomes

The metal roof is able to withstand the area's heavy snowfall. Doug was especially mindful of heading off potential damage by designing the roof so snow would not slide off and pile up on the deck.

which was inspired by her love of marshmallows.

"At night we go out and build a fire on the deck. We love to roast marshmallows and hot dogs. We also have a sound system throughout the cabin with speakers on the deck so we can really enjoy it," he says.

The deck looks out onto heavily forested pine trees and quaking aspens, a species native to Utah. The views were important from every vantage point. Doug says his design incorporated a liberal use of glass "to appreciate all the foliage."

Doug says the home is "perfect for our lifestyle. It's a huge respite for me." It takes just over an hour to make the trip from garage to cabin.

"It's far enough where I truly feel like I'm away but close enough so we can just jump in the car and go."

lyna Bort Caruso is a New York freelance writer.

RESOURCES:

Precision Craft Log & Timber Homes
711 East Broadway Ave.
Meridian, ID 83642
Phone: 800-729-1320
www.precisioncraft.com

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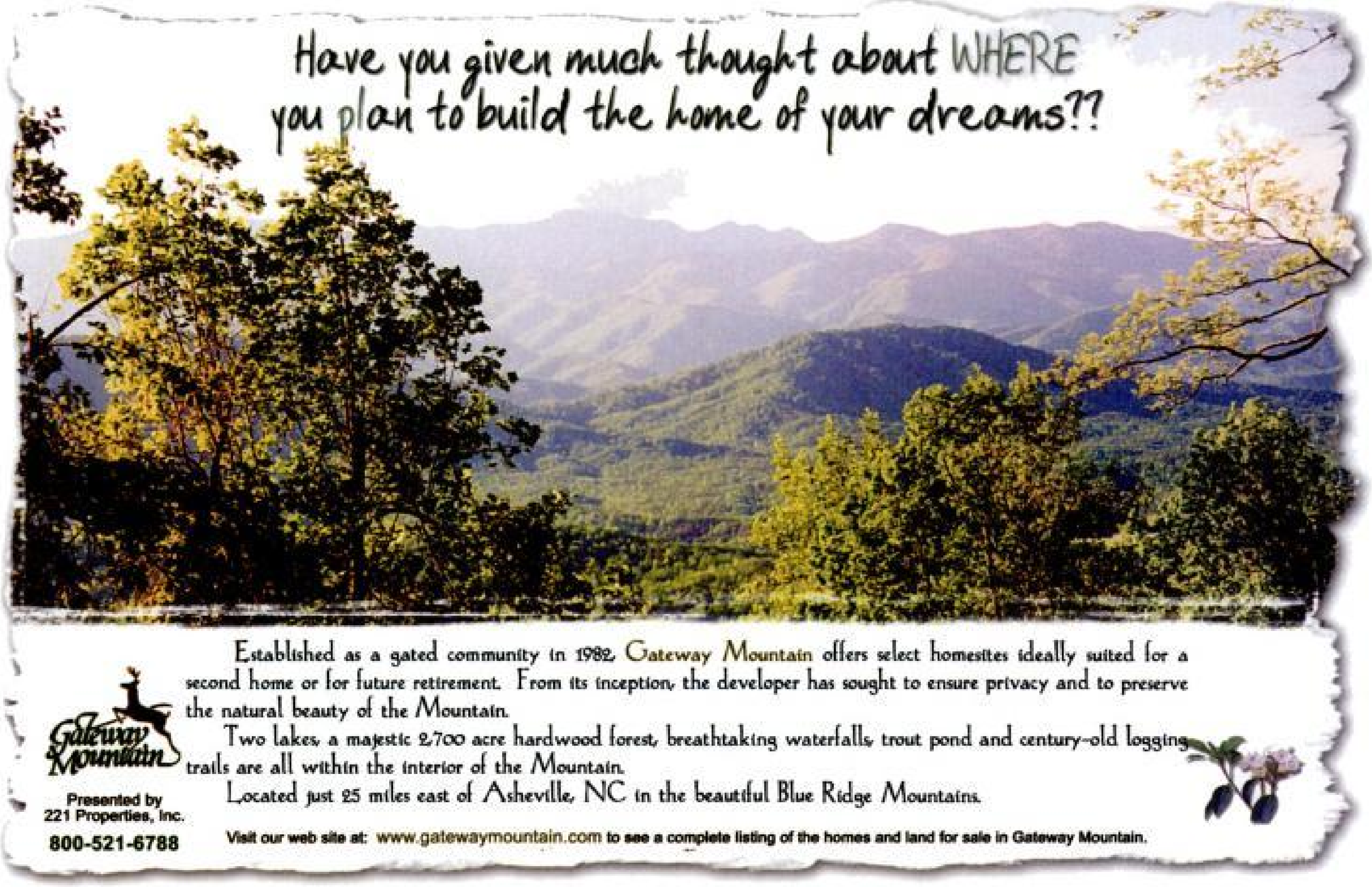

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HOLIDAY WISH LIST

Photo by Munroe Studios

Forget the sugarplums. This holiday season, the log home enthusiast on your shopping list is likely dreaming of a more grown-up gift like rustic furniture. Or maybe this gift is for you. All the better!

Whether you're buying for a friend or for yourself, you're sure to find just the right gift in our exclusive Holiday Wish List section.

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"My Inspiration" is the new 20th Anniversary Limited Edition print by artist Joan White of NICOLET STUDIO. 15" x 24" print shrinkwrapped flat - $50 (US), framed - $160 (US). Shipping is $10 (unframed), $15 (framed).
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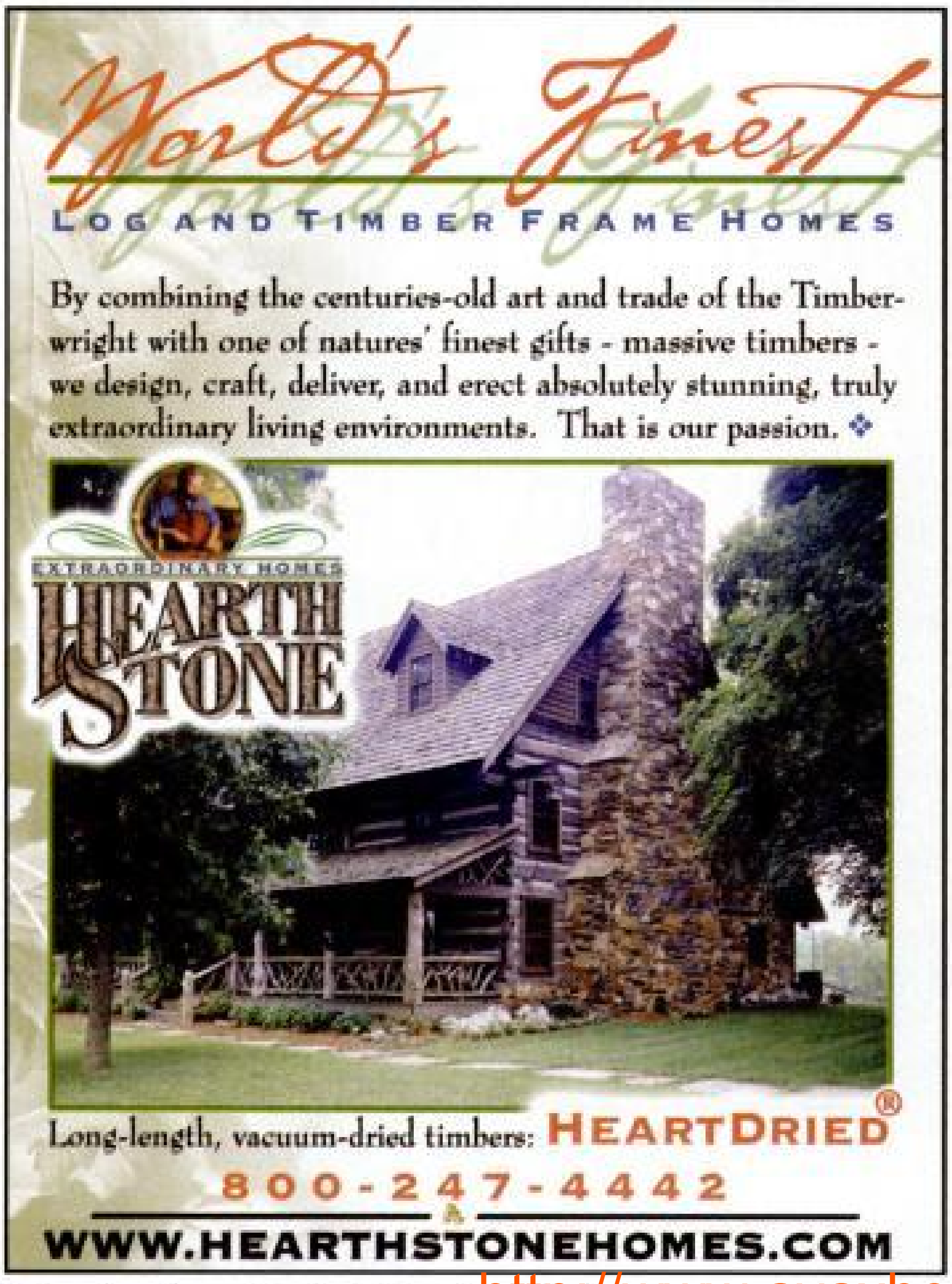

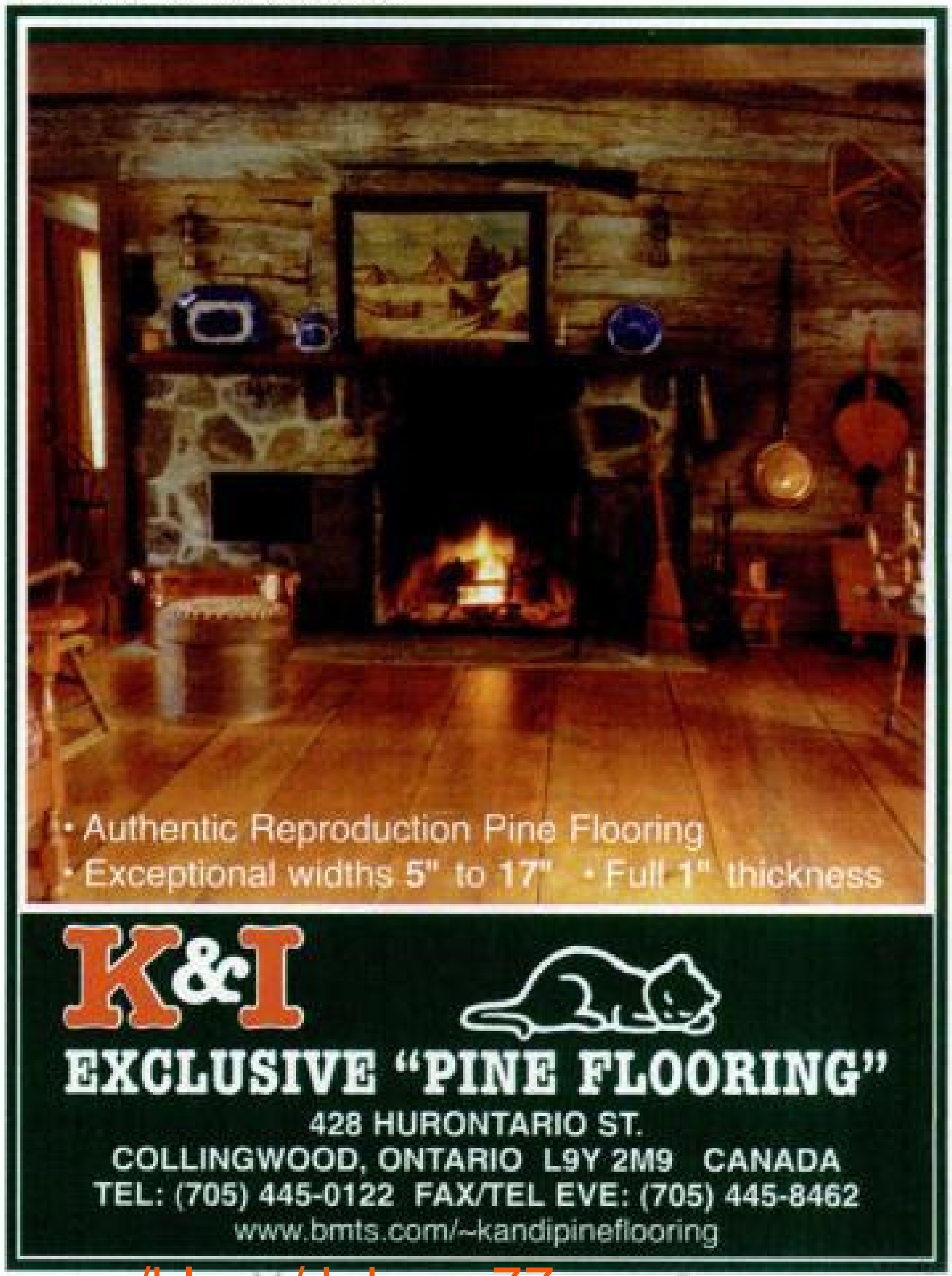

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Art of the Home

Furnishings and accessories for your log home

Profiles by Jay Uhlenbrauck • Photo Courtesy Adirondack Country Store • Profile photos courtesy of the artists featured.

Nothing fills a rustic cabin better than furniture and décor made from natural materials. This section is devoted to craftspeople who use curved branches, seasoned driftwood, even sculpted rock, to create functional works of art.

au naturel

rustic creations for your cabin

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ON TAP

furnishings & accessories for your log home

Warm your cabin with nature-inspired textiles like this loon throw and pillow set from Adirondack Country Store. Tapestry throw is 53"x65" and 100% cotton. Matching pillows are 18".
800-LOONADK
www.adirondackcountrystore.com

Welcome visitors to your cabin with the nostalgic "At The Lake" metal sign from Northwoods Fun. The sign measures 22"x9½" and is available in several finishes.
866-819-7185
www.thefungroup.com

Scout out your favorite fishing holes over breakfast with an inlaid table from Heartwood Topography. Craftsmen custom design each table based on your favorite body of water.
920-727-3600
www.heartwoodtopo.com

Cabin collectibles are right at home on a boat wall shelf from Bean's Boats. This one measures 33"x18" and comes in a variety of colors, including duck boat green (shown here).
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www.beansboats.com

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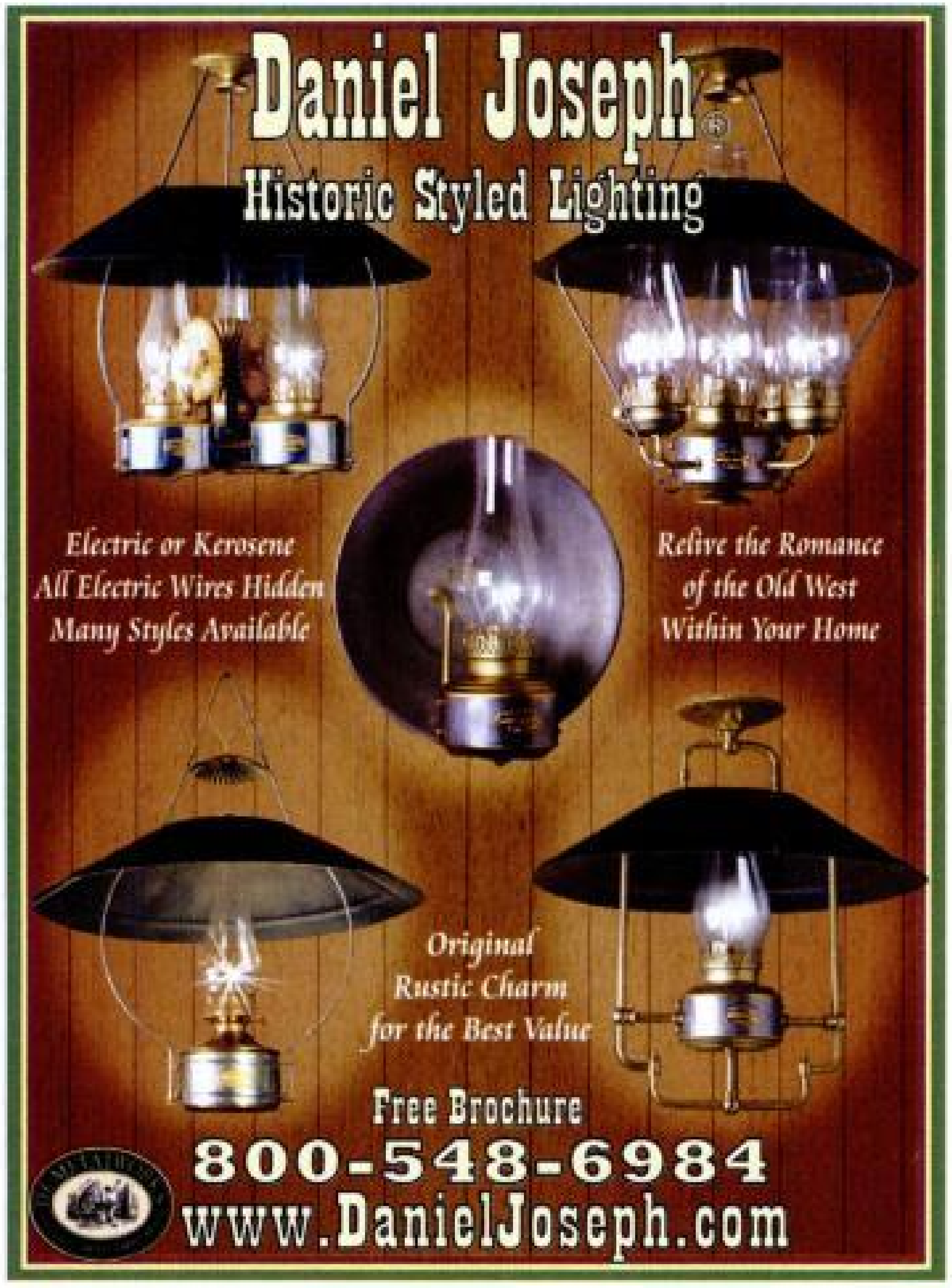

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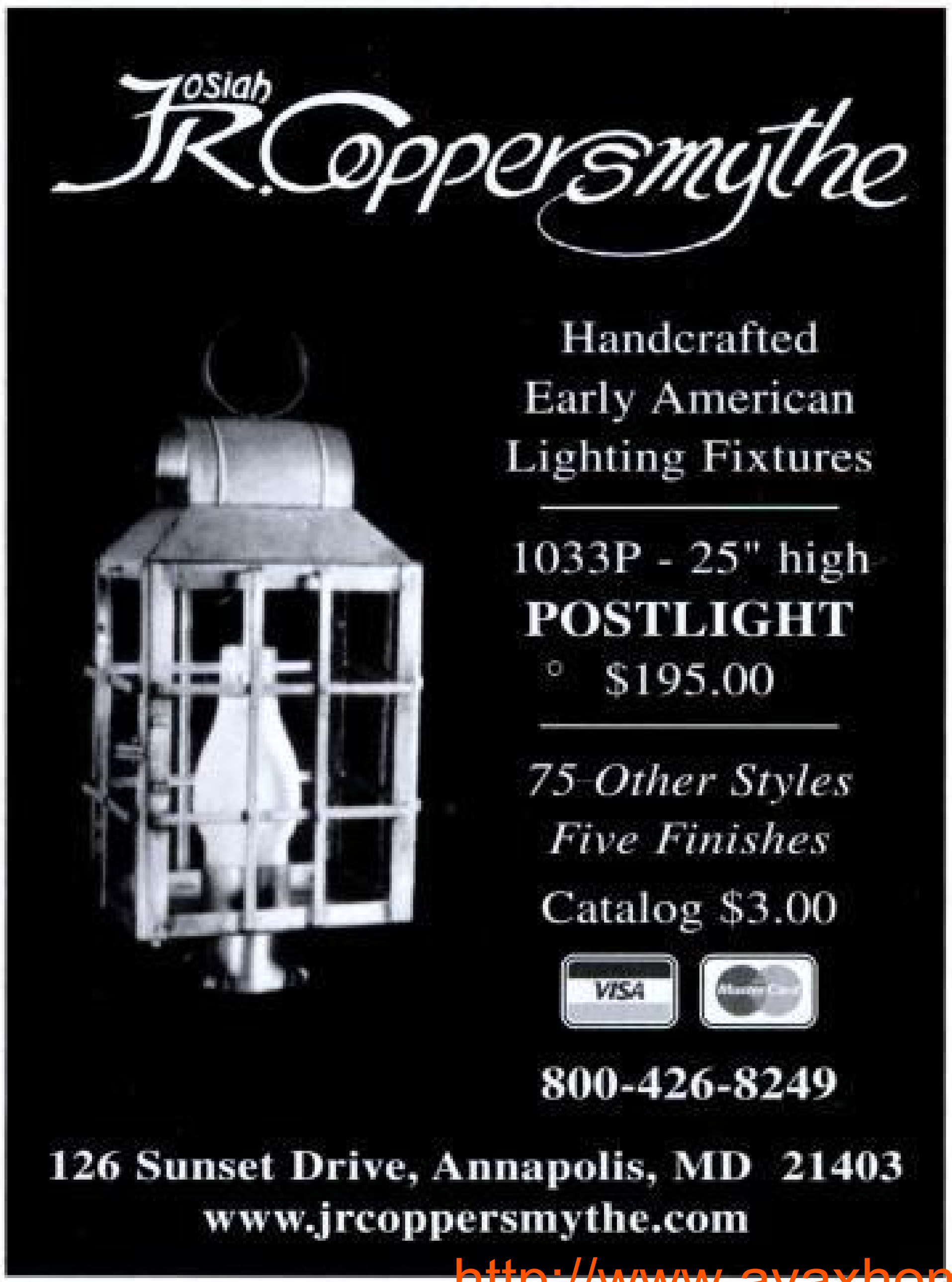

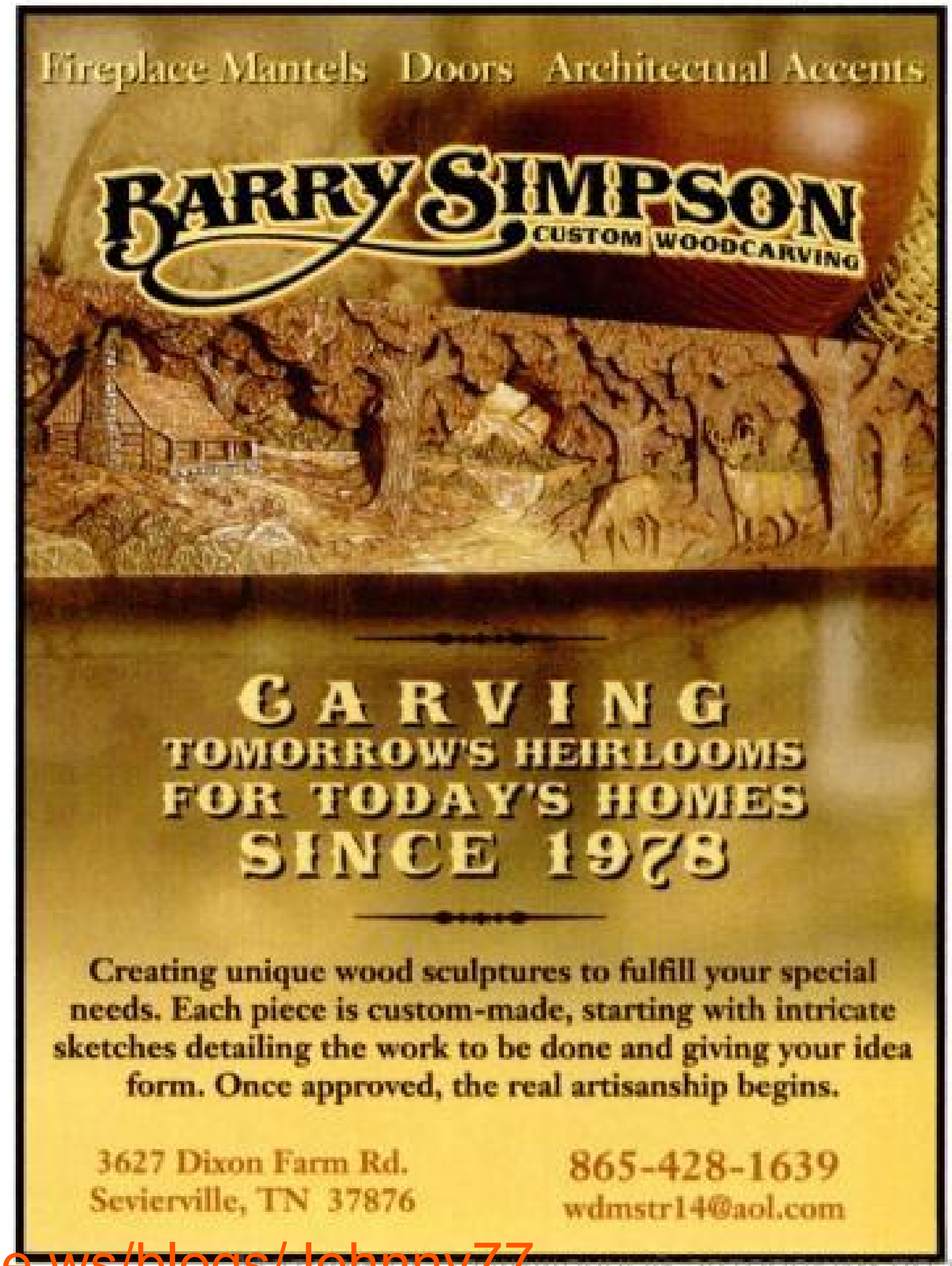

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This lamp from Magic Hammer Forge is a great catch. Each fish lamp features forged, fabricated and inflated iron. A gold interior lamp shade bathes the sculpture in glowing golden light.
985-735-0049
www.magichammer.net

Reflect your rustic style with a Timber Ridge Mirror from Cabin Fever Mountain Home Outfitters.
828-295-0520
www.thecabinfeversite.com

Create a cabin theme in any room of your home with a wall covering from Brewster's Northwoods II collection. Styles include weathered beadboard, aged tooled leather and rough-hewn wood plank (left to right).
800-958-9580
www.brewsterwallcovering.com

Meyda Tiffany sheds new light on a northwoods theme with its Pinecone Three-Light Wall Sconce. The 23" sconce is artfully adorned with handpainted pinecones and branches.
800-222-4009
www.meyda.com

The Moose & Bear newspaper bin is good news for anyone's organized cabin. The wrought iron rack from Black Forest Decor measures 14¾"x17½" and is 11" high.
800-605-0915
www.blackforestdecor.com

Answer the call of the wild in your home with a Wilderness sofa from Marshfield Furniture. The sofa features rayon and polyester upholstery and an oak sculpted wood base.
715-387-1181
www.marshfieldfurniture.com

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THE NATURAL

Michael Hutton is a self-made craftsman. Living in virtual isolation in rural Illinois, he can't help but be original.

"I live in the corn belt," he says. "When I first started building Adirondack furniture I didn't know anything about it. I thought I came up with it."

Michael soon discovered he wasn't the only one doing the popular style of rustic furniture. It didn't come as a disappointment, though. He was excited to see other artists' work in magazines and books.

"It inspired me to no end," he says. "I read everything I could get my hands on."

Not only was it inspiring, it helped Michael develop his techniques. "When I first started doing mosaic twig work, it was very experimental," he says. "It was just trial and error. At first I was using full twigs, then I discovered the secret of cutting them in half. It works much better that way and then you can use pieces that mirror each other."

Michael visualizes every piece of furniture in his head before he builds it. He's more concerned about capturing a feel than staying within a certain style.

"I guess it's that Northwoods feel," he says. "I like the romance of it. The image of an Indian paddling a birch bark canoe across a quiet river, the smell of pine — I try to capture that feel. I want people who see my furniture to get that feeling."

"The image of an Indian paddling a birch bark canoe across a quiet river, the smell of pine — I try to capture that feel."

According to Michael, the toughest part of the process is gathering materials. "I have a friend that owns 250 acres of timber," he says. "I take my pruning saw and look for a crook here and a crook there and then rope it up and carry it all out on my back. In the summer heat, it can be a killer."

For that reason, Michael tries to do most of his harvesting in the fall and winter, but there is always more to gather come summer. He stacks the wood in his shed to air dry before use. He uses a wide variety of woods to add different textures and colors to his furniture. Red elm is his wood of choice for frame work.

"It's a good sturdy, solid wood and it has great color," Michael says. "That seems to be the most popular."

Beyond logs and twigs, Michael likes to incorporate other materials like stones and roots into his furniture.

"It's a way to bring nature into the house," he says. "If you have a pile of pebbles on the floor or roots stacked up in the corner, people would think you're nuts, but if you build it into something functional, it becomes okay."

To contact Michael Hutton, call 217-285-5277 or visit www.therusticandpaintedgarden.com.

The "Cabin on the Cliff" settee (above) is Michael's most popular piece. Each one takes a couple weeks to complete. "It's tough, physical work, but selling it can be even more difficult," he says. "I'm just trying to make a living and hoping people keep liking it."

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FISH STORY

Ellen McCaleb meticulously carves and paints her trophy fish (above and below left) to capture every intricate detail of the client's original catch. She doesn't keep track of the time she spends on each one. "I'm afraid to find out I'm probably only making five dollars an hour," she says. She recently added cold-cast metal fish sculptures to her repertoire (below right). They provide an inexpensive alternative to her wood trophy fish carvings.

For artist Ellen McCaleb, carving was almost the career that got away. After earning an english degree in 1991 she joined the corporate world, managing investor relations for a venture capital firm. In 1996 she started carving as a hobby, and it wasn't long before her hobby became her new career.

"I was always interested in making a living with my hands," Ellen says. "Trophy fish carving combines my interest in art and color with my environmental interests and sense of preservation."

Ellen thought she had a completely original idea until a collector friend told her trophy fish carving started in Europe more than a century ago. Ellen wasn't discouraged by the news; instead she studied up on the rich history of trophy fish carving and set out to put her mark on the tradition.

"A lot of people do decorative fish carvings, but there are only a handful of people in the world that do trophy fish carvings," Ellen says. "I know of only one other in the U.S."

> "Mother Nature is the ultimate artist. I'm not in the business of copying what she made. I'm more after an artistic representation."

Ellen uses chisels and drawknives to carefully handcarve each fish from basswood, but the true artistry begins with the painting. She uses oil paints to replicate the look of antique trophy fish carvings. To give the fish a realistic look, Ellen builds up layers of paint.

"The natural color of fish is almost 3-dimensional," she says. "It's like you're looking into the fish. The layers of paint allow me to replicate that." She also uses paint layers to build up scales. "It looks like the scales are carved in, but they're actually painted on," Ellen says. She then finishes the carvings with linseed oil.

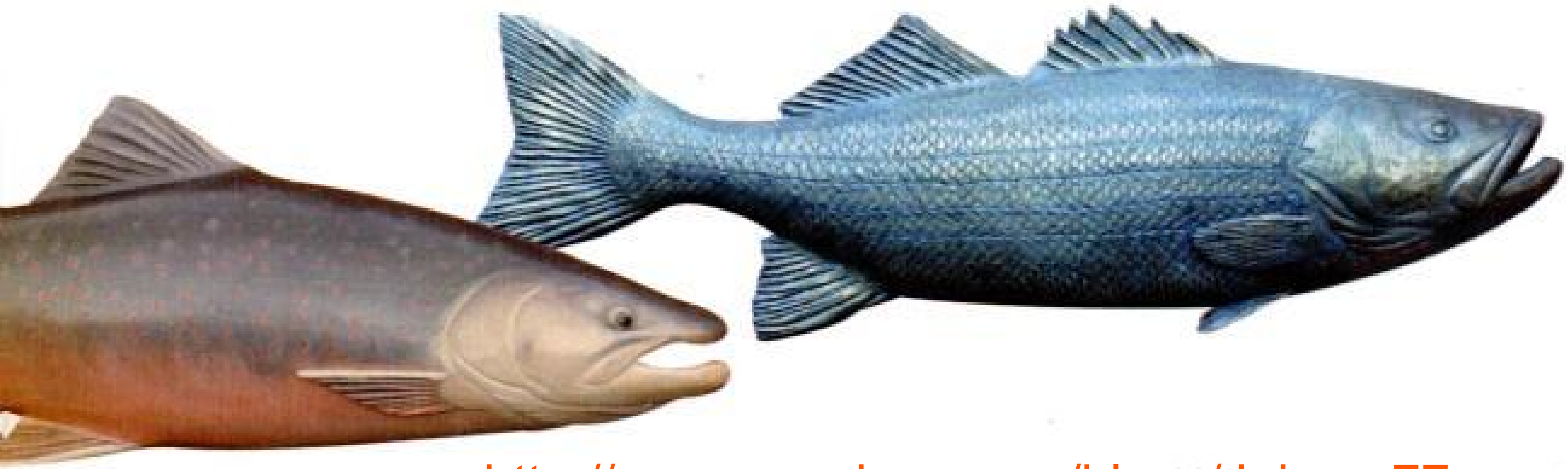
"The original antique trophy fish have been handled by hundreds of people so they have natural oils on them from the hands of everyone who touched them," she says. "The linseed oil helps me accomplish that look."

Ellen describes her style as 80 percent realistic and 20 percent impressionistic. "Mother Nature is the ultimate artist," she says. "I'm not in the business of copying what she made. You can't improve on that. I'm more after an artistic representation."

Ellen works from client photos and from their stories of the catch to capture the spirit of each fish.

"I get to live vicariously through my clients," she says. "I'm honoring the fish that has survived to be 40 pounds and 10 years old. That fish has to be smart and lucky to get that big. I want to honor that spirit — that feisty, fighting spirit."

To contact Ellen McCaleb, call 603-664-7347 or visit www.fishcarvings.com.



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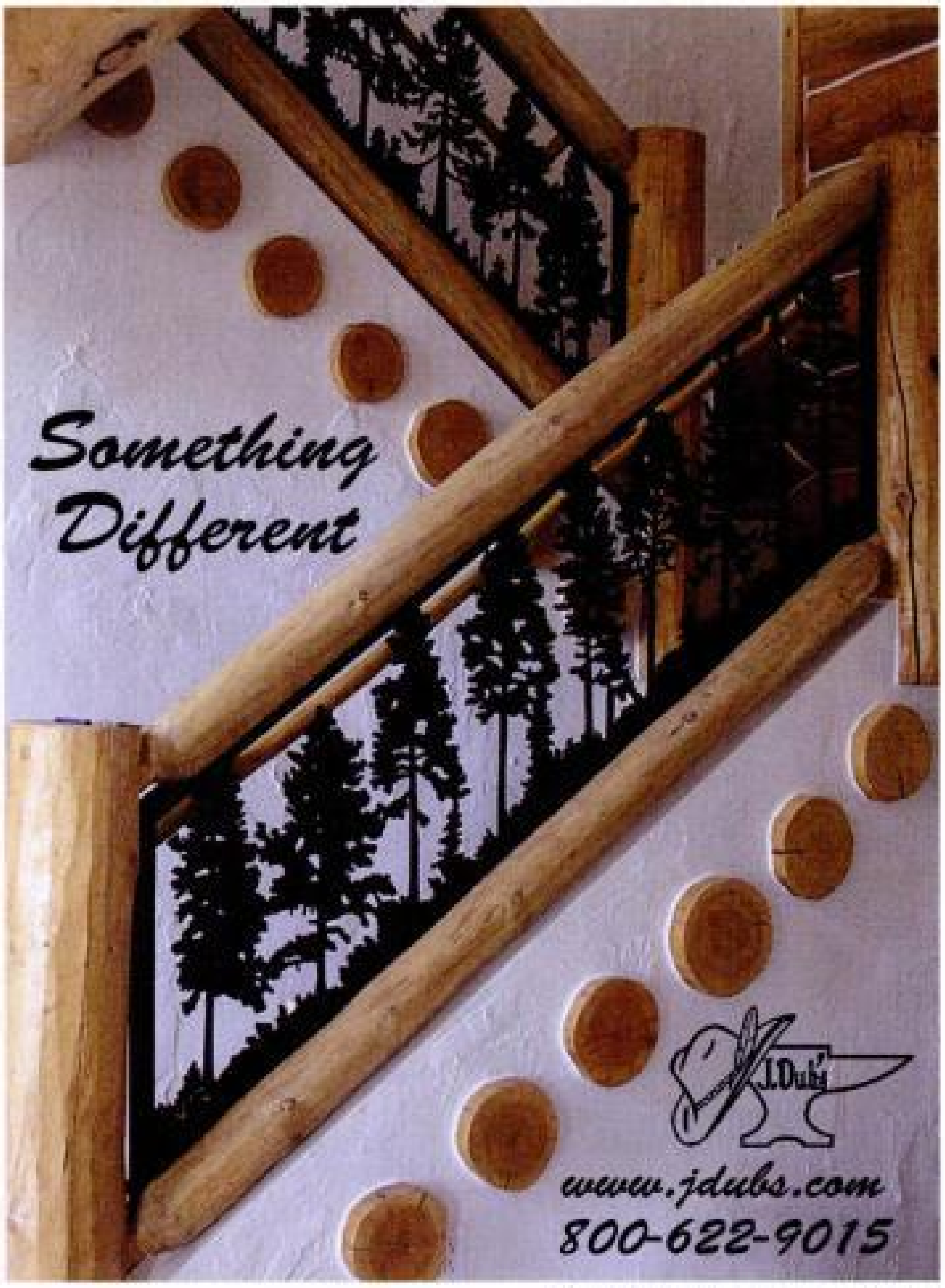

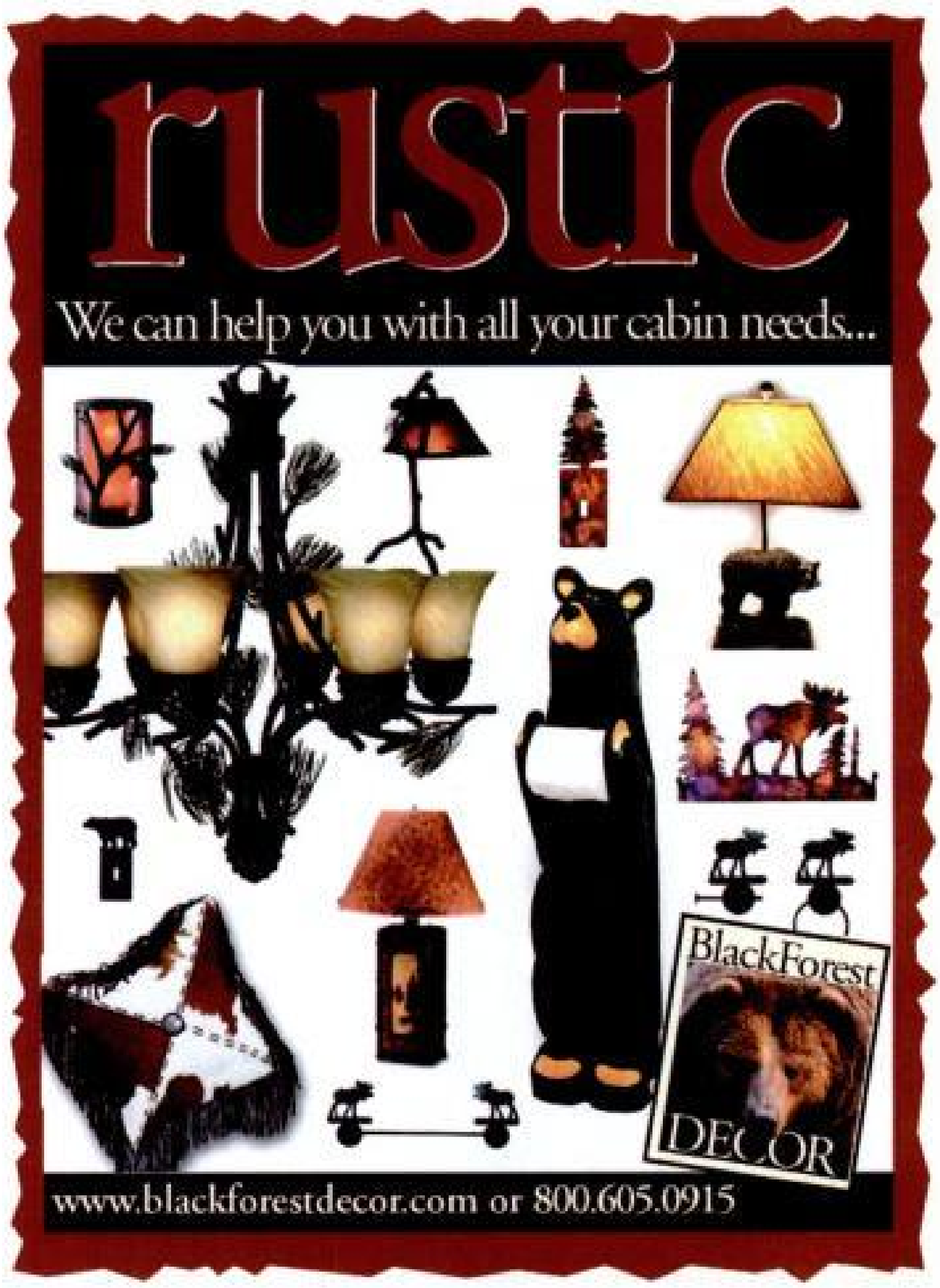

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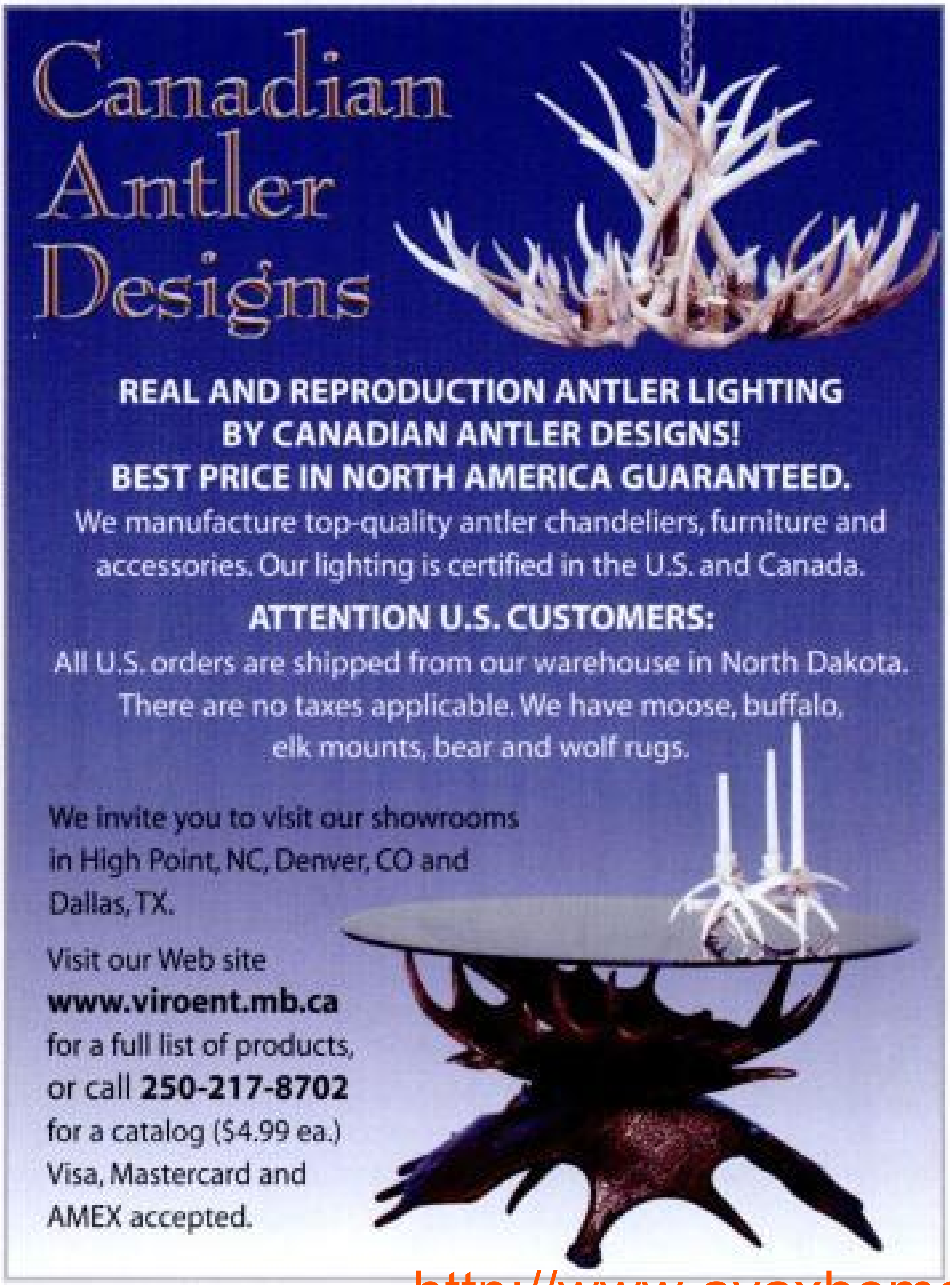

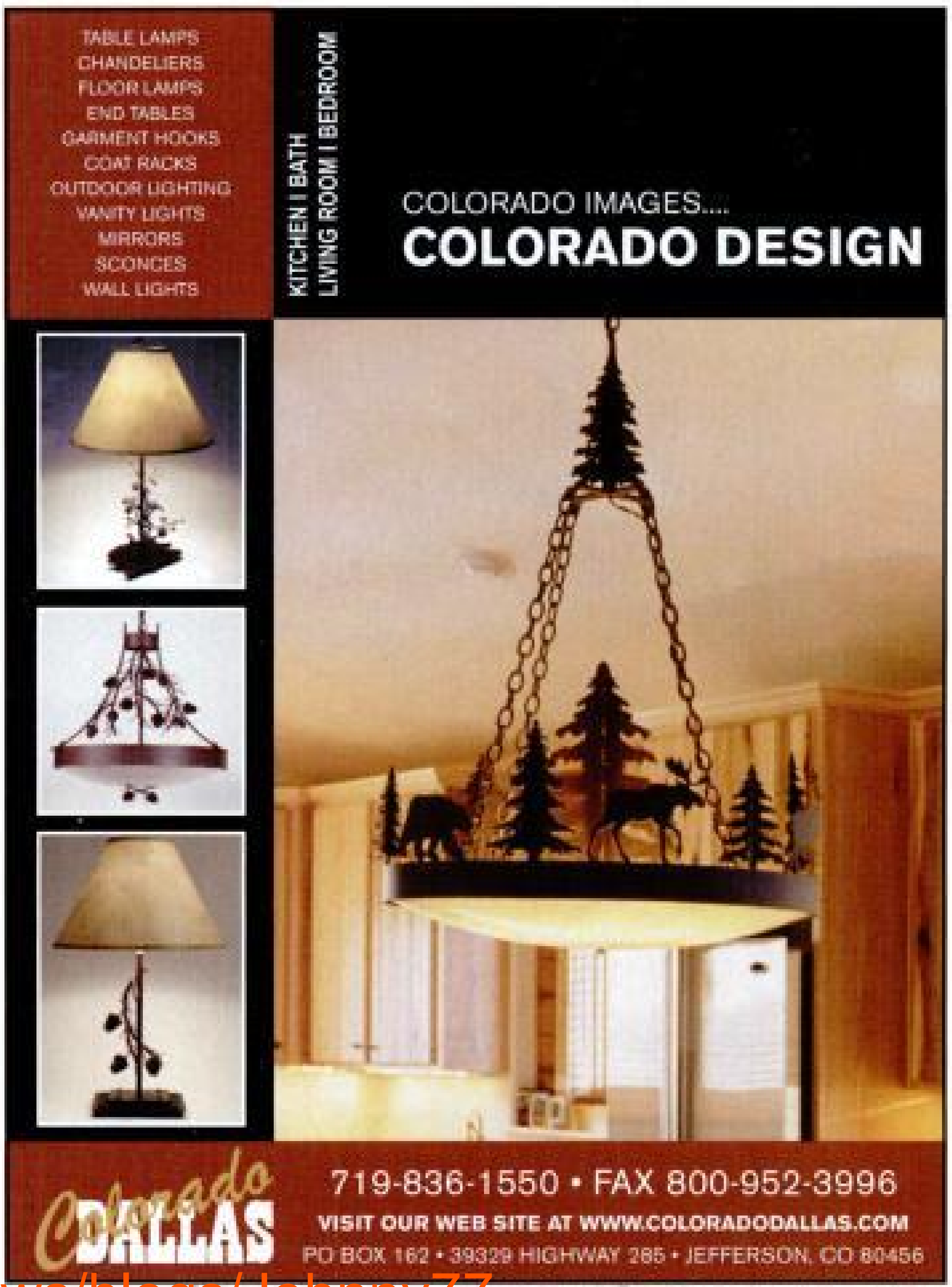

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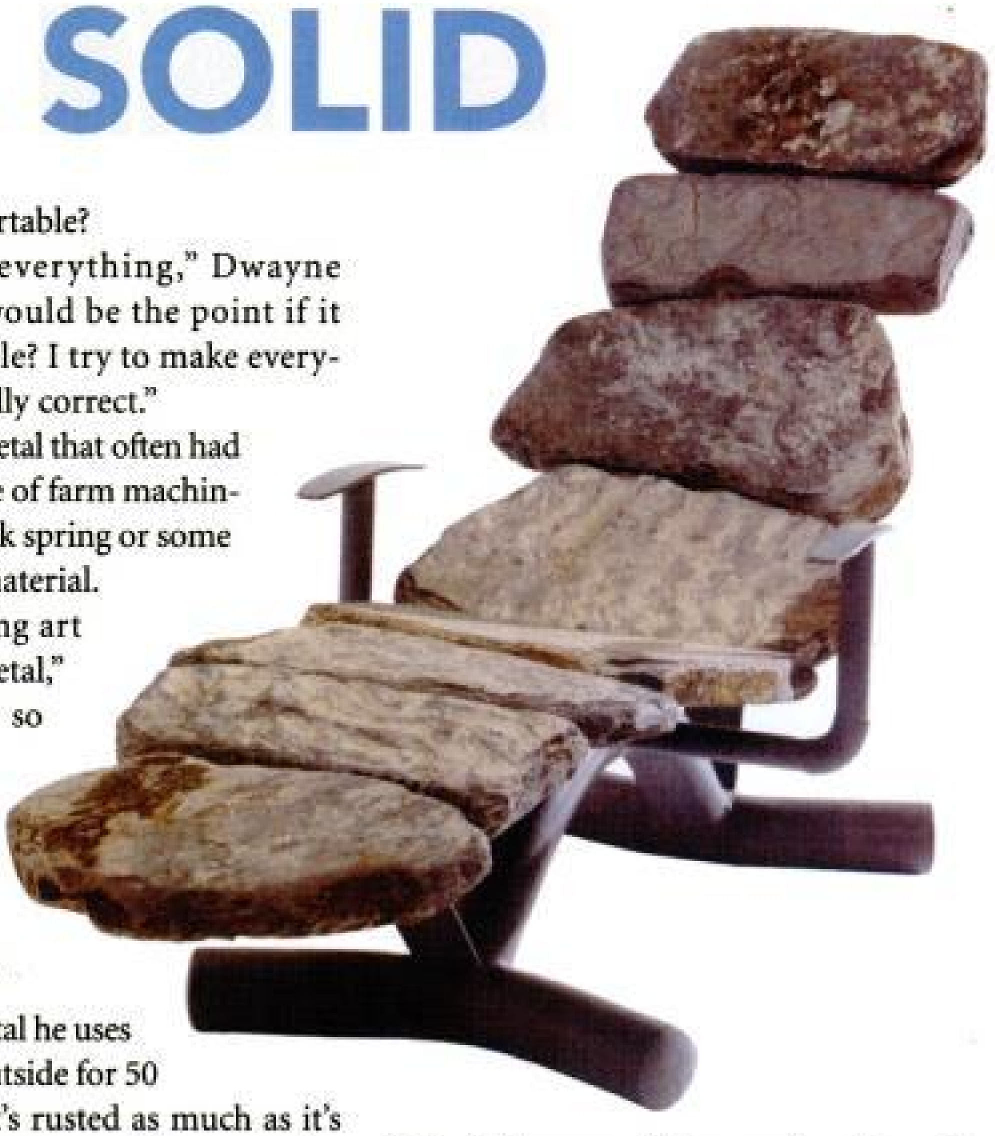
ROCK SOLID



When Dwayne Cranford set out to replace his worn patio furniture, he wasn't interested in a temporary fix — he wanted to build the heavyweight patio furniture champion of the world.

"I was tired of replacing my patio furniture," he says. "I probably went through five sets that were either blown away or rotted by the sun. I decided to build something that would last."

So he gathered some scrap metal and rock and built his first set of permanent patio furniture. Once neighbors, friends and family saw it, Dwayne could hardly keep up with demand. It wasn't long before he was able to quit his job to concentrate on his new business, Stone 2 Furniture.

"It's furniture for people who have everything and want something no one else has," Dwayne says. "It's a rustic, original work of nature."

To say Dwayne's furniture is built to last is an understatement. His stone and metal furniture is sturdy enough to withstand anything Mother Nature throws at it — from hail to hurricane-force winds.

"The chaise lounge I make weighs over 300 pounds," he says. "It's totally weatherproof. It's not furniture you have to drag in during the winter."

But is it comfortable?

"Comfort is everything," Dwayne assures. "What would be the point if it wasn't comfortable? I try to make everything ergonomically correct."

Dwayne uses metal that often had a first life as a piece of farm machinery, a car part, truck spring or some type of railroad material.

"I enjoy making art from discarded metal," he says. "There's so much scrap and waste around. It just makes sense to use metal that no one else has a use for."

Most of the metal he uses has been sitting outside for 50 to 100 years "so it's rusted as much as it's going to rust," Dwayne says. "I can powder coat it if a client wants a different color, but most prefer the natural, rustic look."

To find the right stones for his furniture, Dwayne scopes out quarries and landscape yards to find structurally sound rocks that are the right shape, color and size. Scrap metal is then fabricated to fit each rock.

"It's very labor intensive," Dwayne says. "It's all heavy stuff, but to be able to do something I enjoy and make custom furniture different from everything else out there makes it all worthwhile."

To contact Dwayne Cranford at Stone 2 Furniture, call 970-407-8991 or visit www.stone2furniture.com.

"It's very labor intensive," Dwayne says. "It's all heavy stuff, but to be able to do something I enjoy makes it all worthwhile."

Dwayne Cranford likes the rugged individuality of his furniture. "My patio furniture isn't plastic looking or mass produced," he says. "It blends into natural surroundings better than any other patio furniture I've seen."

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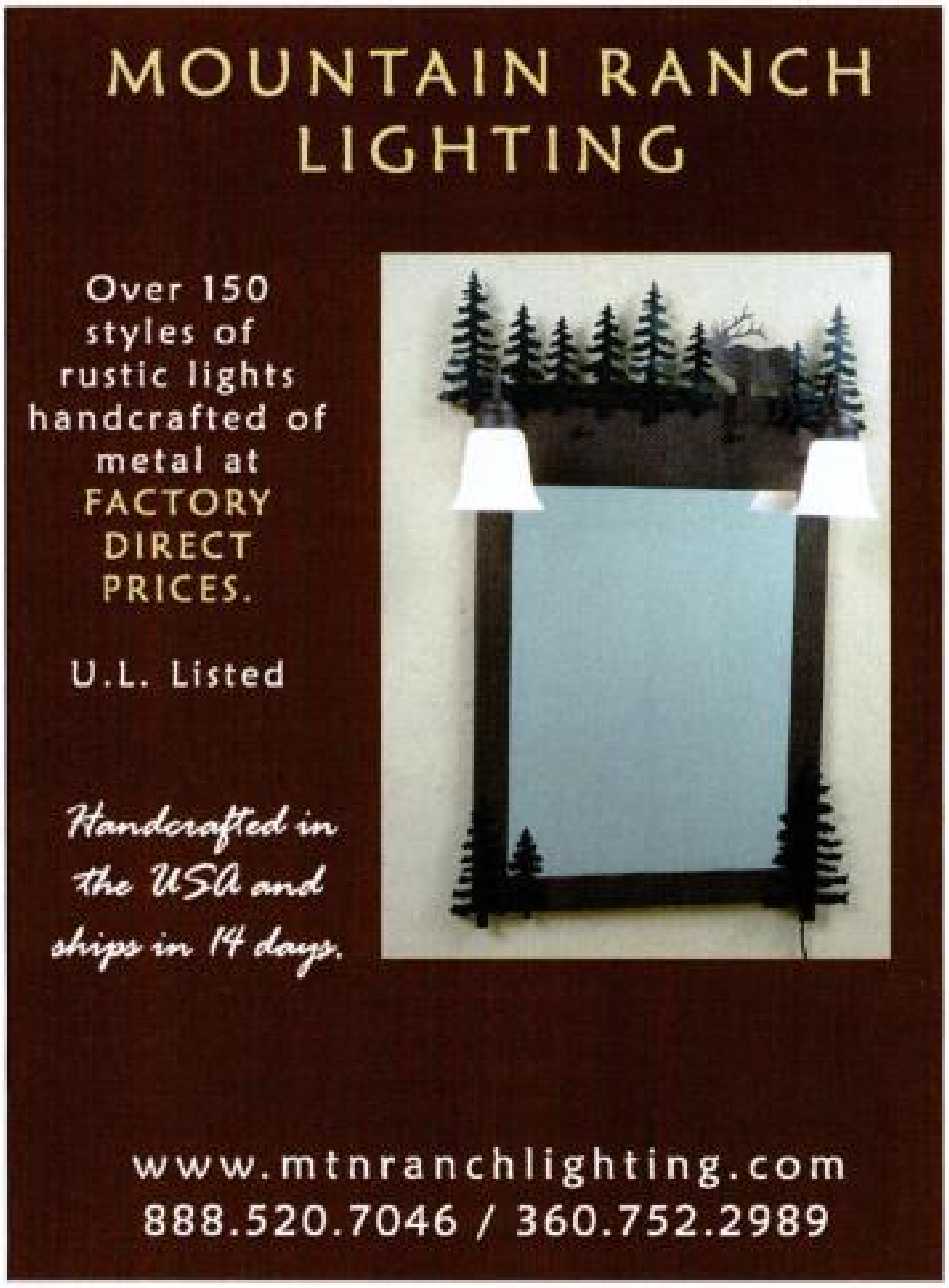

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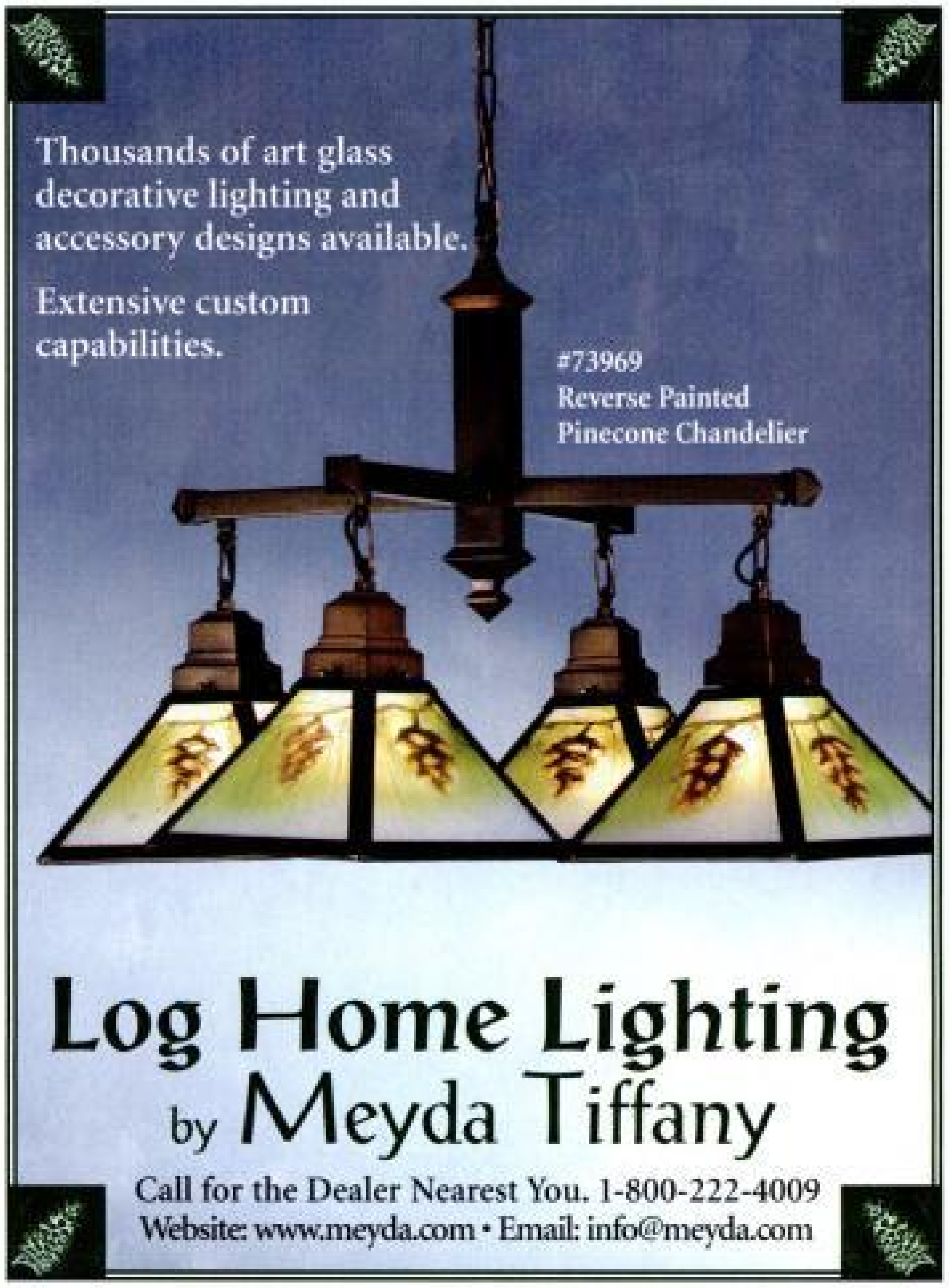
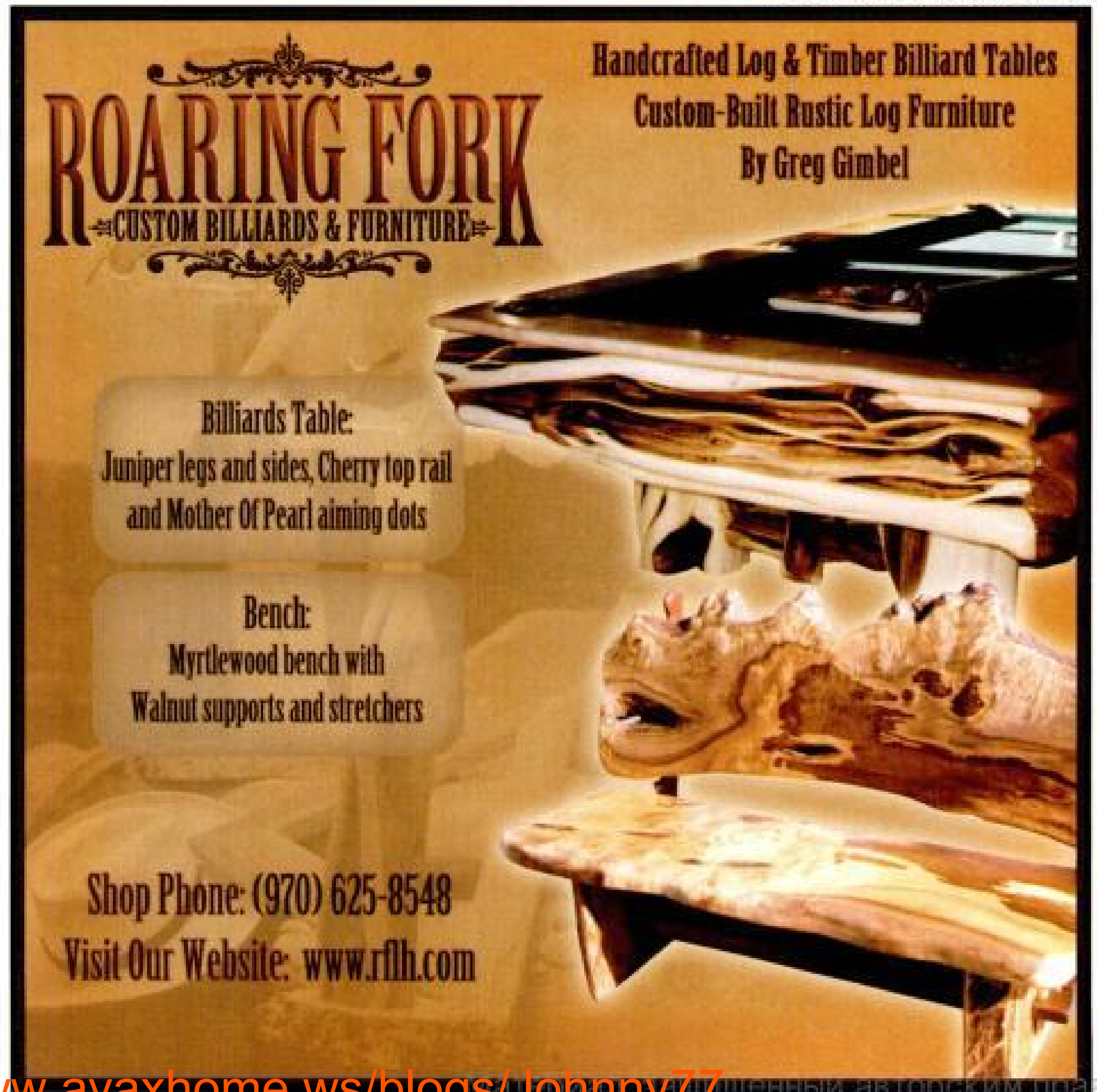


LOOKING To Attend An Event

The "Calendar" section in each issue of Log Home Design Ideas will keep you informed of future open house, log raising, seminar and workshop dates. Look for it on pages 106-112 of this issue.

∇ Circle Reader Response #278



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GIFTED ARTISTS

"Mountain Journey"

When Matt and Theresa Money got married seven years ago, they started a tradition that filled their home with heartfelt art — to the point of overflow.

"I built furniture and gave it to Theresa for Christmas gifts and she gave me paintings," Matt says. "It got to the point where we were running out of room in the house for everything, so we decided to start selling it."

So began their collaborative effort and new life passion, Hilltop Rustic Furniture & Artwork. Matt and Theresa are self-taught artists who feed off the natural beauty around their rural upstate New York home.

"We live 1,500 feet off the main road," Matt says. "It's beautiful. It's right where we want to be."

Beyond serving as inspiration, their land, which is tucked behind several acres of tree farm, provides many of the materials for Matt's furniture. Theresa and six-year-old son Luke often accompany Matt on harvesting expeditions.

"We all go together," he says. "It's a family adventure."

Together they search for unique wood, discarded deer antlers, pinecones, birch bark, woody tree mushrooms and interestingly shaped branches and twigs. Matt uses the materials to build pieces in the traditional Adirondack style. Mosaic twig work is his favorite.

"It allows me to be creative," he says. "You can let your mind go wild. I find it hard to pull myself out of the shop at the end of the day."

Recently Theresa has been incorporating painted accents into Matt's pieces.

"It's a great combination," Matt says. "I don't know why we didn't think about it a long time ago." Theresa agrees. Her wilderness-style paintings are perfectly suited for Matt's rustic furniture.

"I like realism and wildlife paintings," Theresa says. "I think abstracts are interesting, but realism has more feeling." She enjoys the challenge of transforming nature's beauty into a painting.

"It's difficult to recreate what you see in nature," she says. "With a nature scene, everything is beautiful, so it's not always easy to find a focal point. You have to emphasize one thing and lead the eye around the painting to that point."

Theresa and Matt currently pursue their hobbies part-time, with hopes that someday they will be able to focus completely

Some of Matt and Theresa Money's best work is done in tandem. Take the Adirondack desk (right), for example. A small painted wilderness scene is the perfect touch to Matt's artistically crafted piece. Meandering branches were the only necessary accents Matt needed to create a one-of-a-kind rustic chair (top right).

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on their art. Matt is a caretaker for several estates in New York state and Theresa is a nurse. Their art allows them to escape.

"Being a nurse, my schedule is very regimented," Theresa says. "Painting gives me time to free my mind. It's like a little mental vacation."

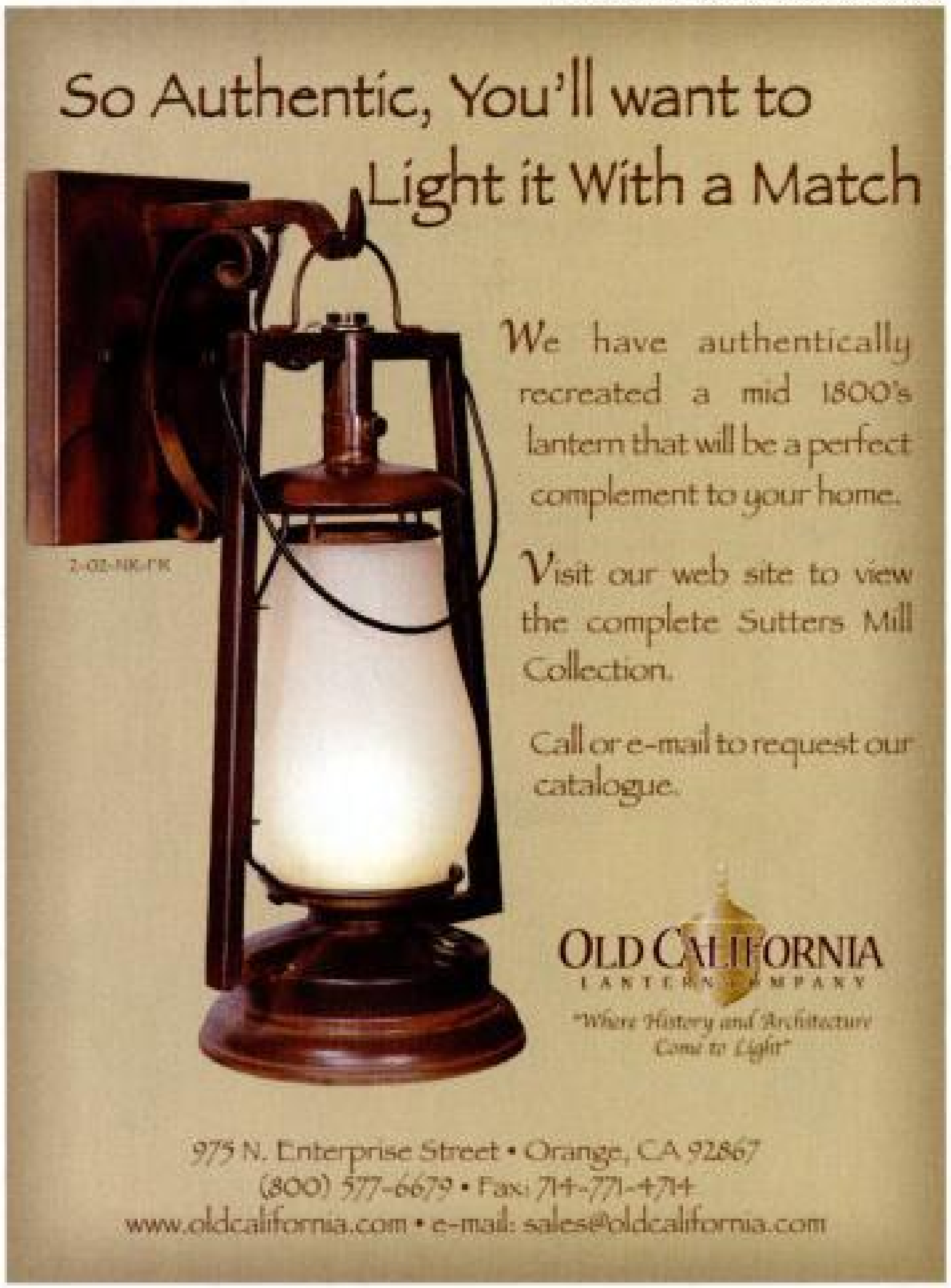
Matt longs for the day when furniture making will be his full-time occupation, but he says he wants to always stay small and keep his style fresh.

"I want to build a reputation of quality, one-of-a-kind furniture," he says. "I'd rather not do a bunch of knock-off pieces and build the same thing every time." And every new idea makes his work more exciting.

"I never thought of myself as an artist while growing up," he says. "This allowed me to set my mind free and be creative. I go to bed every night thinking about the next piece."

To contact Matt & Theresa Money at Hilltop Rustic Furniture & Artwork, call 315-896-2374 or e-mail hilltoprustics@aol.com.

"Moon Shadow"



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COME TOGETHER

Dan O'Neil has always dealt well with "down time." When he was laid off from his job as a steel worker, he took the opportunity to start his own landscape business. Then in the winter when landscaping work slowed, Dan discovered another talent.

"I saw a photo of a rustic chair in a magazine and thought, 'I can do better than that,'" he says. He spent the next few days studying and gathering materials.

"It's a challenge to work with the odd forms ... Sometimes you turn a limb a little and it all comes together."

"I went to the library and checked out every book and magazine on rustic furniture I could find," Dan says. "Within a week I had a garage full of driftwood."

Dan had built arbors and gazebos for various landscaping jobs, but this was his first attempt at rustic furniture.

"I didn't have much experience, but I've always been good with my hands," he says.

Dan is inspired by other rustic furniture artists, but he likes to incorporate his own twists. One thing that separates him from other rustic craftsman is the way he blends conventional lumber with rustic driftwood.

"My style is rustic with a clean line," he says. "It's a piece of art, but it's also functional furniture. I want to create things you wouldn't see in a department store."

Dan harvests driftwood about three times a year from the Ohio River, just a mile from his house.

"I don't just pick up everything I see," he says. "I examine each piece looking for character. Often I cut it up right there on the riverbank and take only the usable pieces."

Once he gets the driftwood home, Dan leaves it to dry for months, then sandblasts it to remove any dirt or debris. "That's when the wood comes alive," he says. "The character just jumps out."

Chances are by this point in the process Dan knows exactly what each piece will be used for.

"The limbs basically speak for themselves," he says. "I usually know what I'm going to make out of each piece."

Then it's just a matter of fitting the pieces together. It's not as easy as it may sound.

"It's a challenge to work with the odd forms and different shapes and sizes," he says. But it's also something Dan really enjoys. He tries to position each limb so the most interesting part of the wood is showing.

"Sometimes you turn a limb a little and it all comes together," he says.

To contact Dan O'Neil at O'Neil Rustic Creations, call 412-364-1245 or visit www.oneilrusticcreations.com.

Dan O'Neil mixes dimensional lumber and driftwood to create furniture that is artistic yet functional. "Driftwood has so many knots and veins," he says. "It's just begging to be built into furniture."

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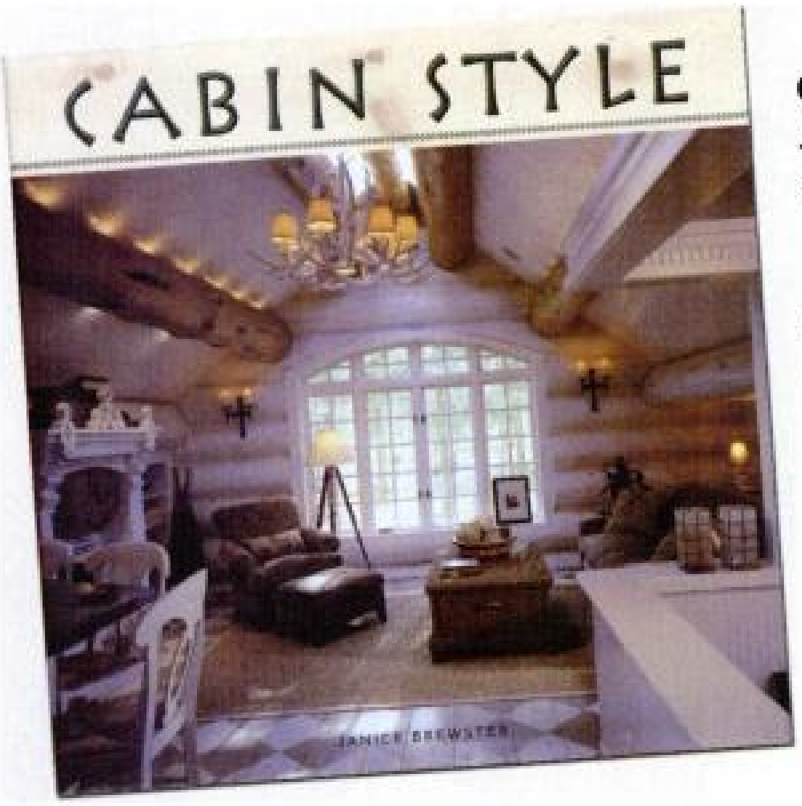
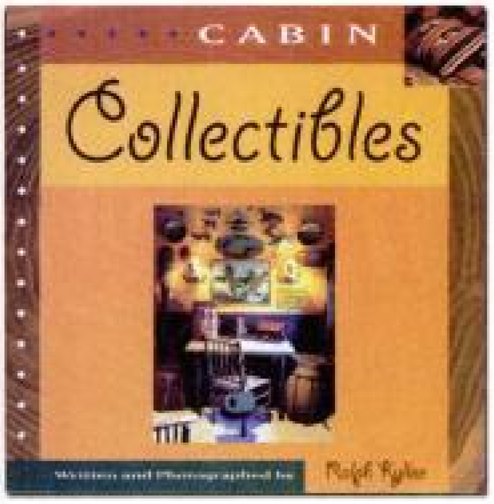


Cabin Style

Janice Brewster • 128 pages
Publications International, Ltd.

Think you know what cabin style is all about? Think again. Today's cabins are no longer shacks tucked back in the woods and filled with second-hand furniture. In *Cabin Style*, Janice Brewster leads readers through the cabins of the past, from the Great Camps of the late 1800s to the latest in cabin décor. Whether you own a cabin or plan to decorate a room in your home with a cabin theme, *Cabin Style* is packed with stunning photography that is sure to inspire.

To contact Publications International, Ltd., call 847-676-3470 or visit www.pubint.com.



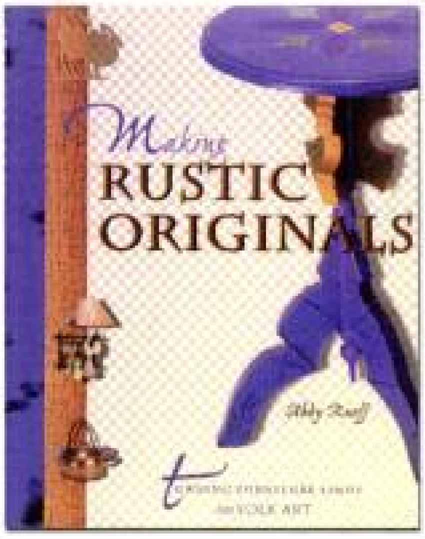
Cabin Collectibles

Ralph Kylloe • 126 pages
Gibbs-Smith, Publisher

Ralph Kylloe isn't just riding the wave of the rustic furniture revolution — he helped start it. As a rustic furniture collector, dealer and enthusiast, Kylloe has been on the forefront of this unique decorating style since it started regaining popularity two decades ago.

In *Cabin Collectibles*, Kylloe provides insight into the staples of rustic décor, from painted canoe paddles to antique fishing creels. The book is a great introduction to decorative cabin accessories and a must-have for the rustic collector.

To contact Gibbs-Smith, Publisher, call 800-748-5439 or visit www.gibbs-smith.com.



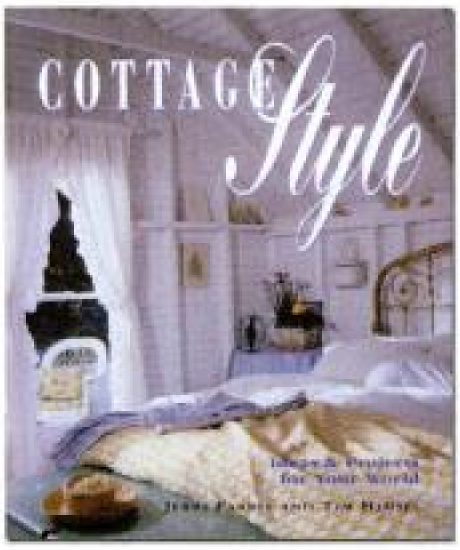
Making Rustic Originals

Abby Ruoff • 208 pages
Hartley & Marks, Publishers

What could be better than a piece of rustic furniture that perfectly fits your log home? How about that same piece, only created with your own hands — a truly original work of art.

In her book, *Making Rustic Originals*, Abby Ruoff shares her love for turning furniture finds into folk art. Accompanied by helpful illustrations and color photos, Ruoff outlines 62 step-by-step projects meant to transform yard sale cast-offs into one-of-a-kind rustic originals.

To contact Hartley & Marks, Publishers, call 800-277-5887 or visit www.hartleyandmarks.com.



Cottage Style

Jerri Farris & Tim Himsel • 141 pages
Creative Publishing International

For many of us, cottages provide some of our fondest memories. If you want to capture the romance of that feeling in your home, *Cottage Style* is your handbook. The book combines design principles with practical projects to help you create your own cottage atmosphere.

Author Jerri Farris is sure you'll fall in love with the style. "Cottage style is graciousness come to life," she writes. "It is the decorating equivalent of my mother's lifelong insistence that pretty food tastes better."

To contact Creative Publishing International, call 800-328-0590 or visit www.creativepub.com.

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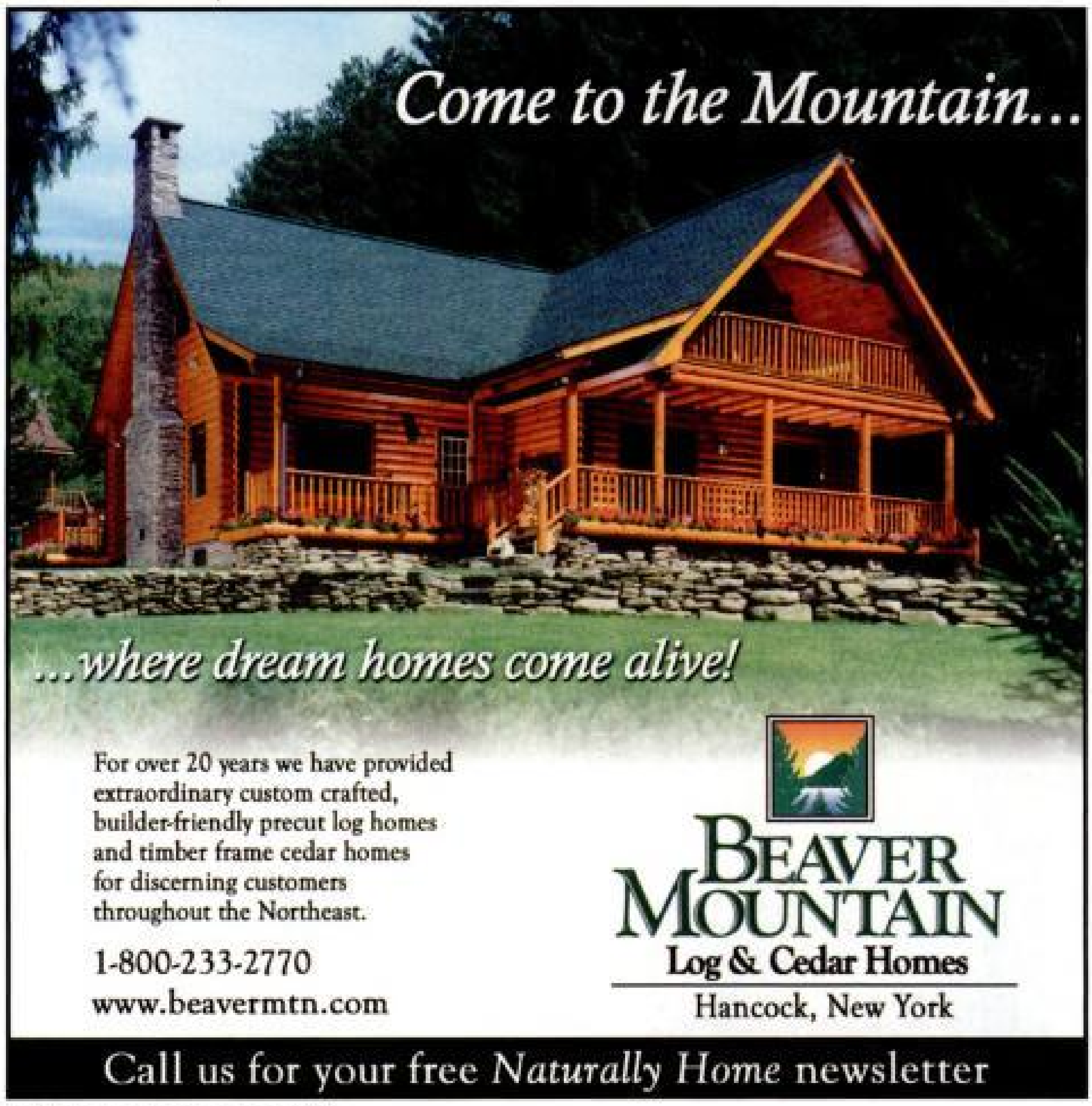

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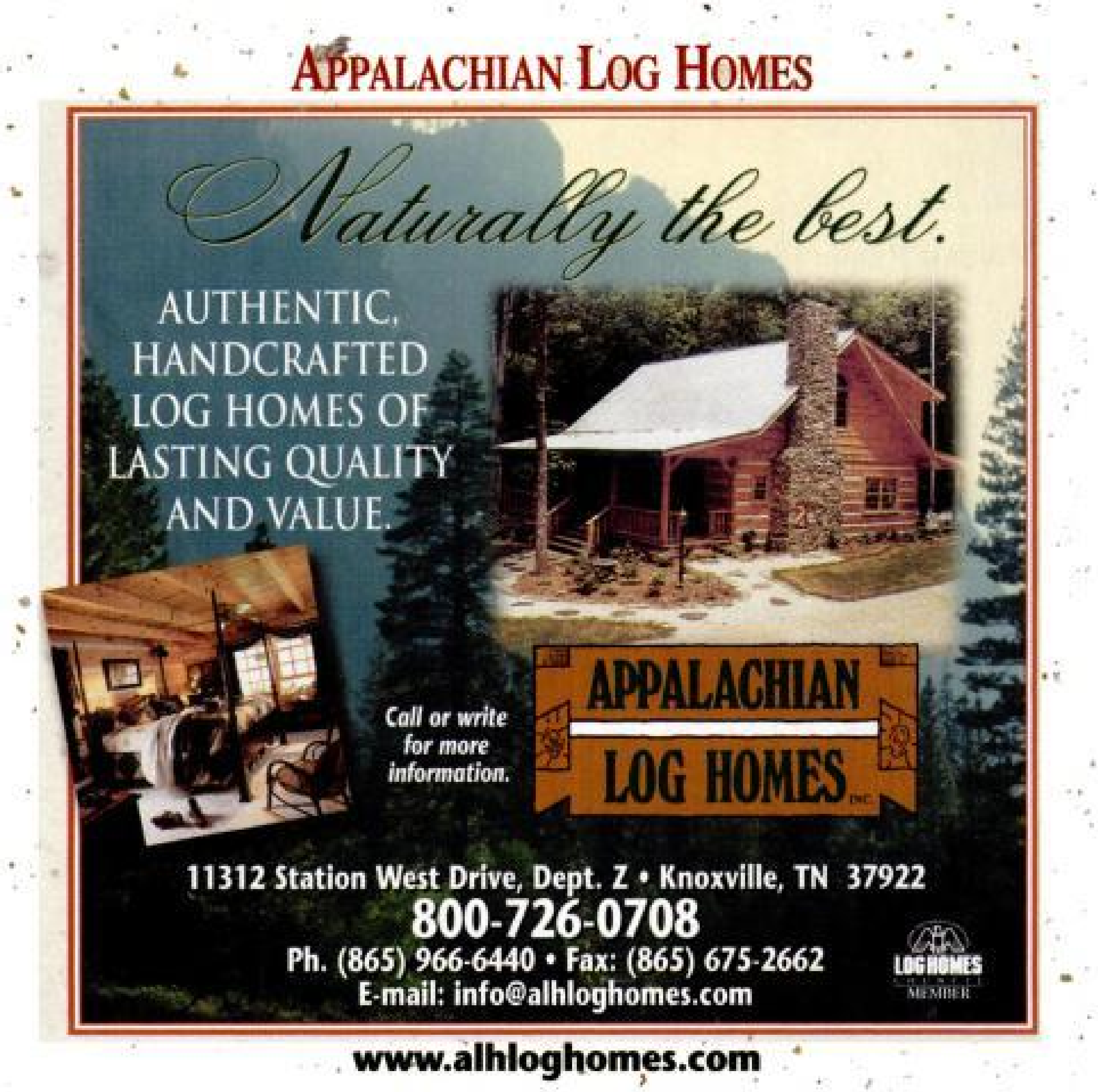

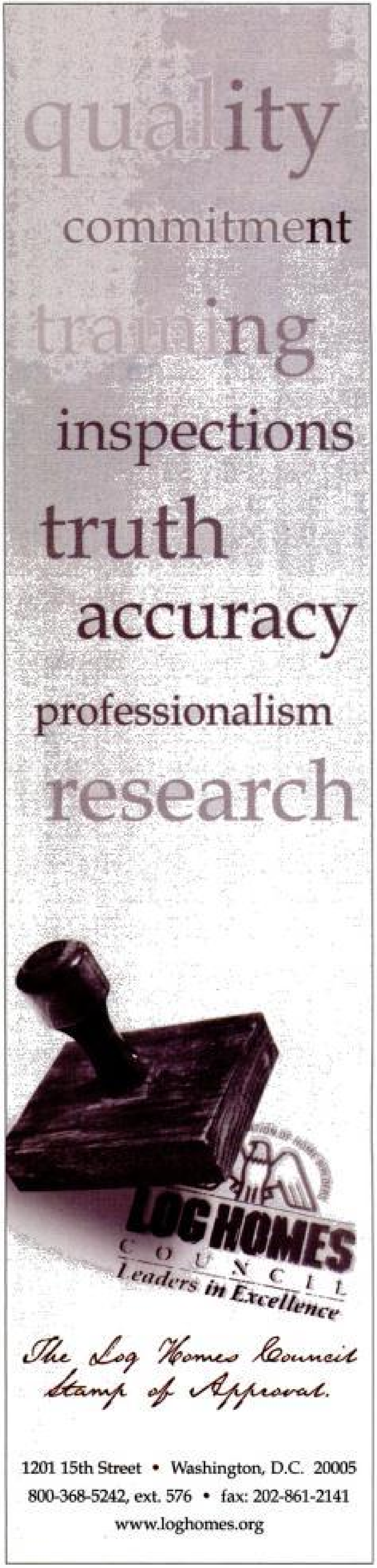

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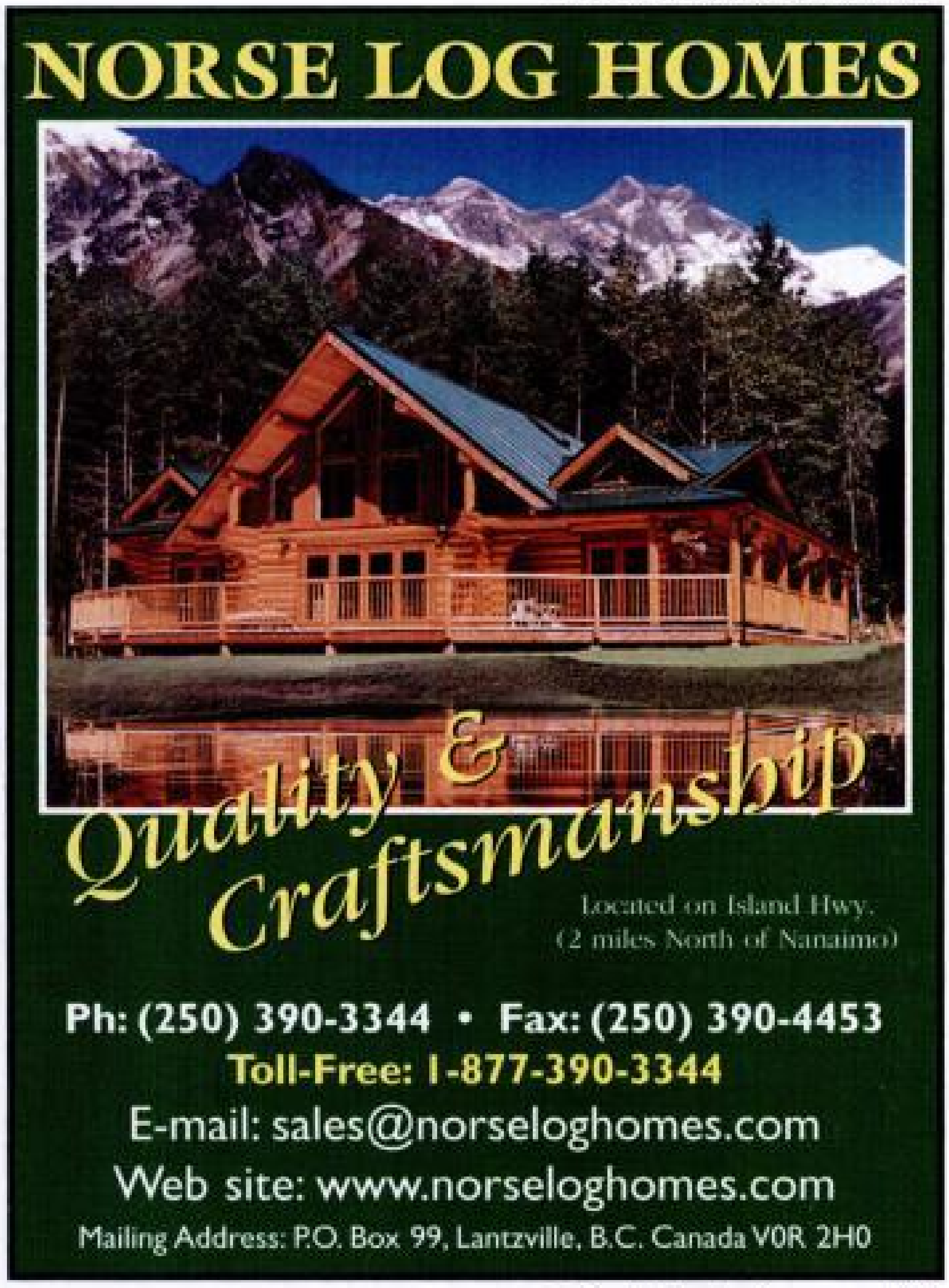

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Comfortable on the lake, a mountainside or even a meadow, this lovely handcrafted home is sure to make you feel warm and cozy all year long. New to our Handcrafted Series, the Blue Ridge is quickly becoming one of our most popular homes. Add a basement and double your living area without losing the exterior charm of this rustic beauty. Cornerstone Log & Timber Homes specializes in custom home design. We can modify this plan to meet your needs or assist you in designing a home that is a reflection of you.

MAIN FLOOR

BLUE RIDGE

Total Area: 1,480 sq. ft.
Porches: 568 sq. ft.

Call for package prices.
Catalog: $3.95 S/H

At just under 1,000 square feet, the Pennington is the perfect retreat for you and your family. A delightfully charming exterior lends way to a very functional interior with two bedrooms, a full bath and a spacious living area. The second floor loft can be used as an office space or convert to sleeping quarters for your guests. Cornerstone Log & Timber Homes specializes in custom home design. We can modify this plan to meet your needs or assist you in designing a home that is a reflection of you.

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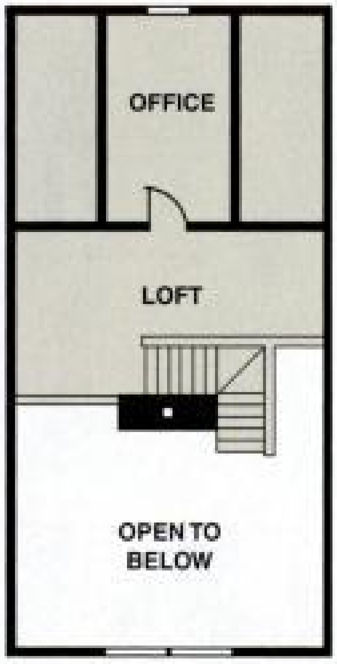

SECOND FLOOR

PENNINGTON

First Floor: 800 sq. ft. Second Floor: 191 sq. ft.
Total Area: 991 sq. ft.
Porch: 160

CORNERSTONE LOG & TIMBER HOMES

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ASPEN

First Floor: 1,655 sq. ft. Second Floor: 838 sq. ft.
Total Area: 2,493 sq. ft.

The Aspen was designed for living! The log ridge beam with log rafters gives the home a warm feeling. The classic prow and cathedral ceiling in the great room create an open and inviting atmosphere. The great room opens to the dining area and a well laid-out kitchen. The large master bedroom opens onto a covered deck. Upstairs are additional bedrooms, with storage and a loft. Precision Craft specializes in custom design and can modify this or any plan.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

MONTE VISTA

First Floor: 1,565 sq. ft. Second Floor: 848 sq. ft.
Total Area: 2,413 sq. ft.

The Monte Vista offers spectacular views throughout the entire house with its classic full-length glass prow and cathedral ceilings. The dining area features a glass-filled turret for additional views. Upstairs, a spacious loft takes advantage of the large prow windows and is adjacent to the master bedroom suite. Precision Craft specializes in custom design and can modify this or any plan.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

Precision Craft
Log & Timber Homes

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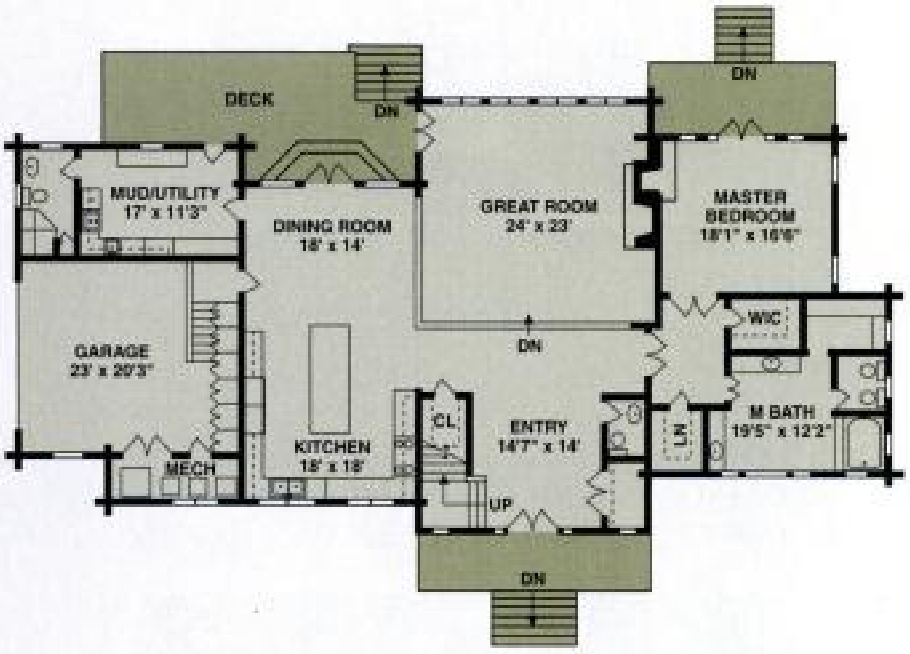
JEFFERSON

First Floor: 2,783 sq. ft. Second Floor: 2,208 sq. ft.
Total Area: 4,991 sq. ft.
Garage/Mech. Area: 530 sq. ft.

Come home to the warm and inviting Jefferson floor plan. A stepped roof and truss provide an impressive covered porch while a large entry opens into the great room, which is flanked by the master suite. Separate decks sit off the master bedroom and the dining room. Upstairs is a second master suite and a bunkroom for extra sleeping space. The upstairs bedrooms and media room feature walk-out balconies. Precision Craft's professional architectural staff specializes in custom design and can modify any plan.



FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

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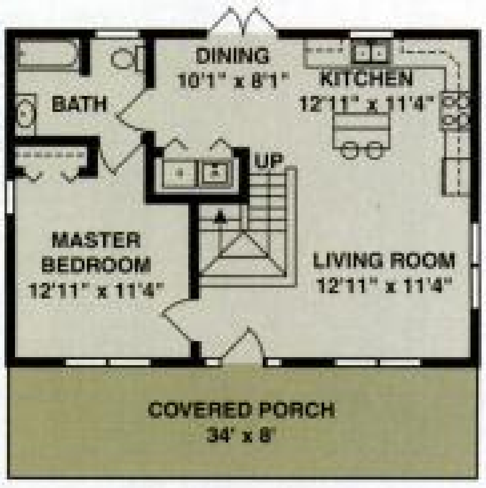
HICKORY

First Floor: 816 sq. ft. Second Floor: 491 sq. ft.
Total Area: 1,307 sq. ft.
Price: $75,441

Featuring a wraparound porch and dual dormers, the Hickory provides the perfect rustic charm. Picture this home on a stream or mountain hideaway and bask in the relaxation and serenity that only a modern log home can provide. The Hickory is offered with your choice of log styles and can be customized to suit your individual needs at no additional charge.



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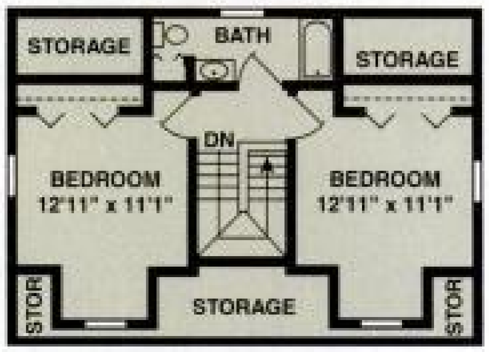
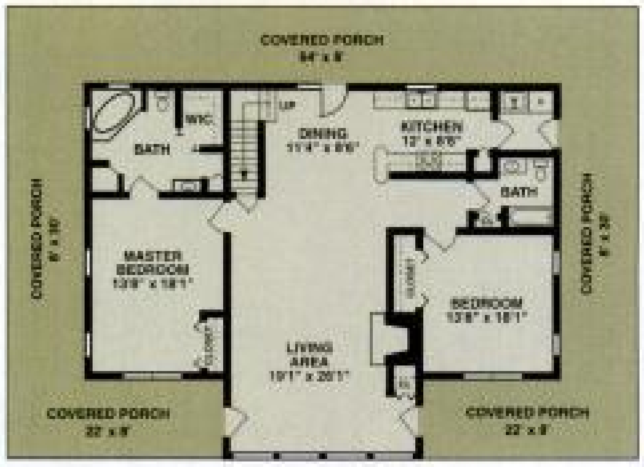


SECOND FLOOR

NORTH RAPIDS

First Floor: 1,600 sq. ft. Second Floor: 665 sq. ft.
Total Area: 2,265 sq. ft.
Price: $108,994

The North Rapids from Battle Creek Log Homes combines contemporary styling with traditional log home design. You will enjoy relaxing under vast covered porches or taking in views from the spacious living room in this elegant but rustic log home. Call us for more information on the North Rapids or other Battle Creek plans.



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SECOND FLOOR

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BIG CREEK

Total Area: 7,300 sq. ft.

This distinctive log home combines American tradition with contemporary design. The main floor includes a great room, spacious kitchen and spiral staircase. An 800 square foot master suite features a bath and a nearby hot tub room. Laundry facilities are between the kitchen and three-car garage. The lower level includes guest quarters with three bedrooms and three bathrooms, as well as a large entertainment room.

SECOND FLOOR

FIRST FLOOR

LOWER LEVEL

Neville Log Homes

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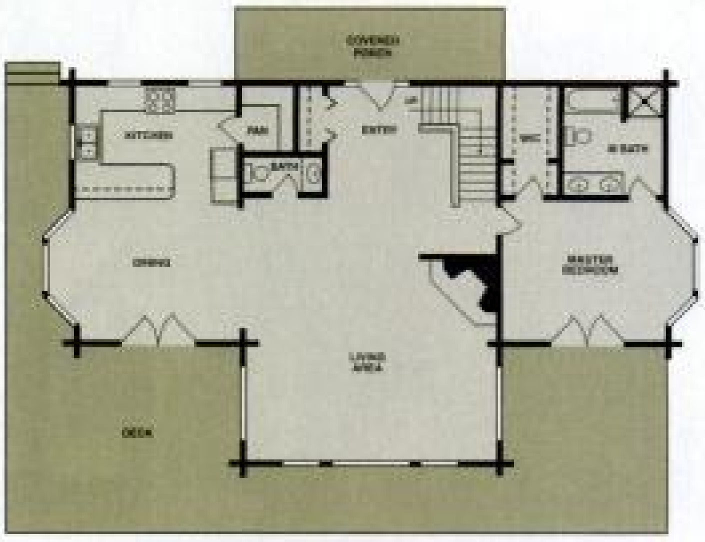
MC CALL

First Floor: 1,320 sq. ft. Second Floor: 1,088 sq. ft.
Total Area: 2,408 sq. ft.

This large, traditional style log home with its spacious three bedrooms offers country living with all the modern conveniences of the 21st century.



FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

THE PAYETTE

First Floor: 1,084 sq. ft. Second Floor: 526 sq. ft.
Total Area: 1,610 sq. ft.

The Payette is one of Lodge Logs' most popular plans. The floor plan is designed for both comfort and practicality. It features an upstairs master bedroom with an adjacent loft that overlooks the great room. Combine this plan with the quality products that Lodge Logs produces and we believe it creates a home of unmatched beauty.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

LODGE LOGS
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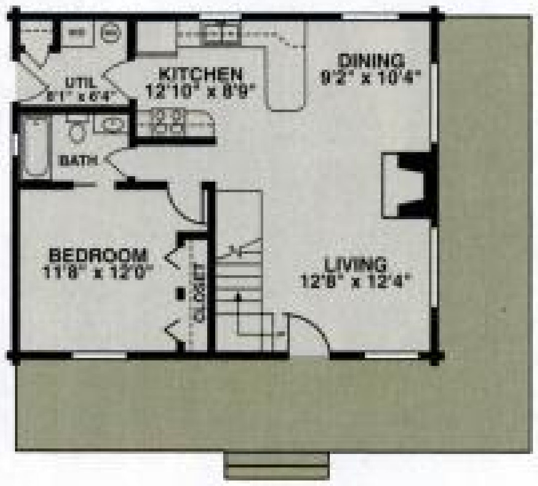
Are you looking for the perfect getaway cabin? This little beauty is one of our most popular models and is easily modified to suit your needs. At 1,168 square feet, the Boulder features an open kitchen and living area and a versatile loft that can double as a bedroom. The covered porch adds to the country charm of this ideal retreat. Call us for details and pricing on the beautiful Boulder!



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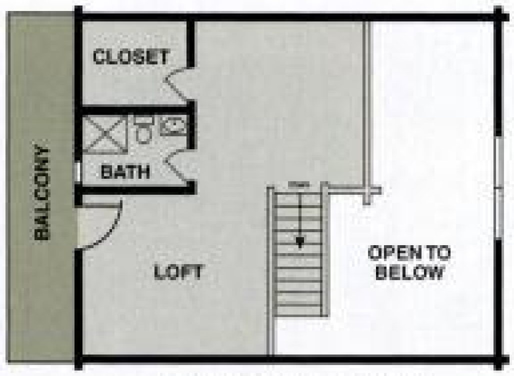
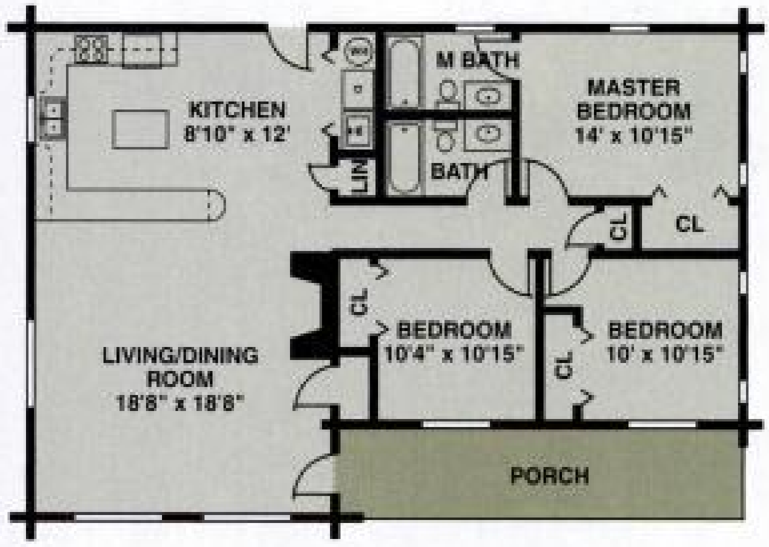


SECOND FLOOR

BOULDER

First Floor: 832 sq. ft. Second Floor: 336 sq. ft.
Total Area: 1,168 sq. ft.

This classic, country-style home is reasonably priced and inexpensive to build. The Musselshell is reminiscent of the low profile dwellings of days gone by. This ranch-style home offers three bedrooms, two bathrooms and an open living/dining and kitchen area. Call us today for pricing on this quaint, yet comfortable home.



MAIN FLOOR

MUSSELSHELL

Total Area: 1,313 sq. ft.
Call for package prices.

LumberJack Log Homes

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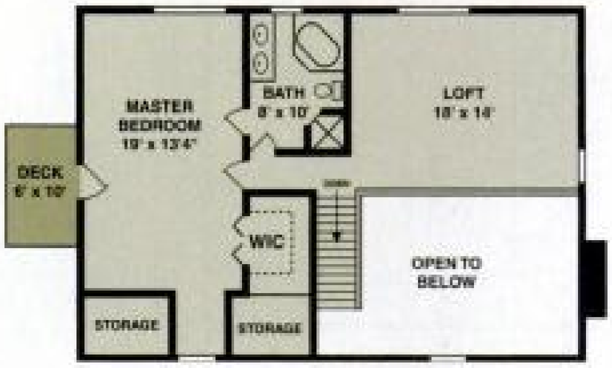
THE MANATEE

First Floor: 1,264 sq. ft. Second Floor: 819 sq. ft.
Covered Porch: 640 sq. ft. Total Decks: 360 sq. ft.

Total Area: 2,083 sq. ft.

This home offers a living area with a fireplace and a dining room tucked off the kitchen. Upstairs is an open loft with a secluded master bedroom and private balcony.

FIRST FLOOR



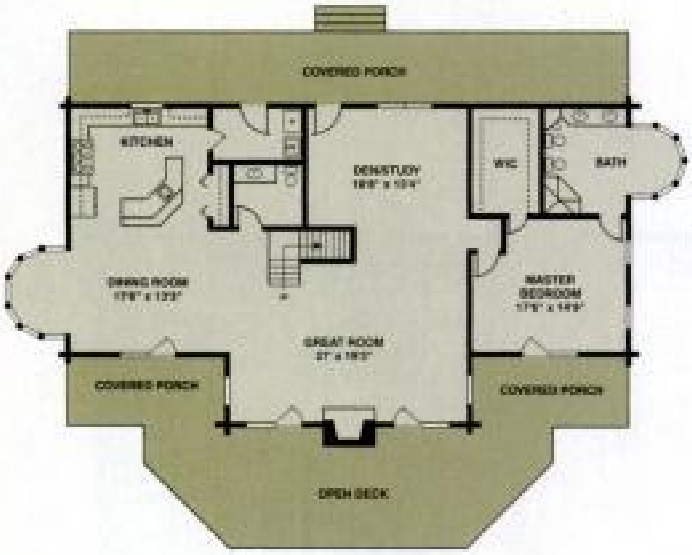
SECOND FLOOR

THE SHENANDOAH

First Floor: 2,044 sq. ft. Second Floor: 1,048 sq. ft.
Covered Porch: 800 sq. ft. Total Decks: 502 sq. ft.

Total Area: 3,092 sq. ft.

This home provides many views from anywhere in the home. Large bow windows increase the light in both the dining room and the master bath, while both upstairs bedrooms have 8-foot dormers for maximum exposure.



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Circle Reader Response #54

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MOUNTAIN VIEW

Total Area: 2,184 sq. ft.

Log Wall Package: $41,245 Shell Package: $71,365

Complete Package: $90,585

The Mountain View offers 2,184 square feet of living space. It has three bedrooms plus a loft and two baths. A lovely glass package brings an abundance of light with a cathedral ceiling. The generous living area opens onto a spacious deck. Your family will love all this home has to offer. Our complete package includes sub-floor, pre-cut kiln-dried log walls, Andersen windows, Therma-Tru doors, loft system, complete roof system, interior frame and T&G pine to finish, solid wood interior doors, lockset and much more. Call to ask about our shipping special.

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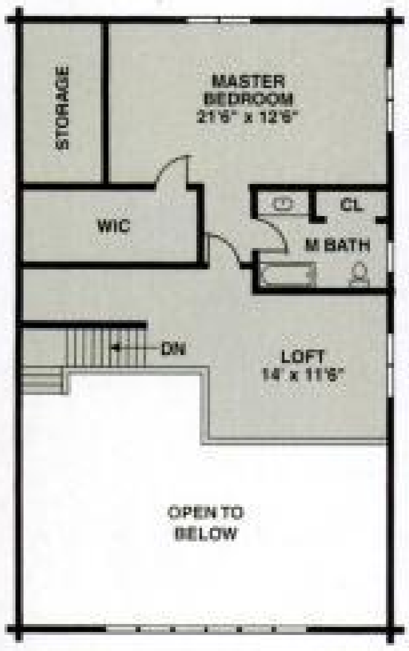

SECOND FLOOR

CHEYENNE

Total Area: 2,454 sq. ft.

Log Wall Package: $49,770 Shell Package: $77,835

Complete Package: $94,210

The Cheyenne model is 2,454 square feet and has three bedrooms plus a loft, two baths and an attached two-car garage. This home offers large square footage at an affordable price, including open living space with a porch and deck for outdoor entertaining. The glass package adds light and warmth to this lovely model. Our complete package includes sub-floor, pre-cut kiln-dried log walls, Andersen windows, Therma-Tru doors, loft system, complete roof system, interior frame and T&G pine to finish, solid wood interior doors, lockset and much more. Call to ask about our shipping special.

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Circle Reader Response #129

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The Elkhart is perfect for a small family yet cozy enough for that cabin in the woods. The entryway off the front porch leads to a welcoming fireplace in the great room. The open kitchen, dining and great room area is made for entertaining or quiet family evenings. The sunroom across the back of the home is a place to enjoy the warmth of a winter morning or the cool of summer evenings. Two bedrooms and a bathroom complete the main floor.
An open stairway leads to a large room in the loft that can be used as a third bedroom, den or library. A balcony to the outside finishes the room. Extra storage space is a bonus. The Elkhart, like all Greatwood Homes, is available as is or can be customized to fit your dream. Please call for additional details.

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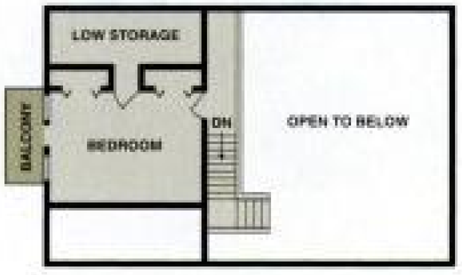

ELKHART

Total Area: 1,519 sq. ft.

Elegance describes the Marquis from Wilderness Log Homes. A bow window and two dormers adorn the front and a large deck surrounds the kitchen for easy outdoor entertaining. The fireplace sets the stage for warm cozy nights whether you enjoy it from the great room or the master bedroom. Upstairs, two bedrooms with private baths are separated by a loft that overlooks the great room. A library extends from the rear of the loft and an elevator provides easy access from the main floor. Call today for more information about this exquisite new floor plan by Wilderness Log Homes.

SECOND FLOOR

FIRST FLOOR

MARQUIS

Total Area: 3,627 sq. ft.
Call for package price

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www.wildernessloghomes.com

Circle Reader Response #85

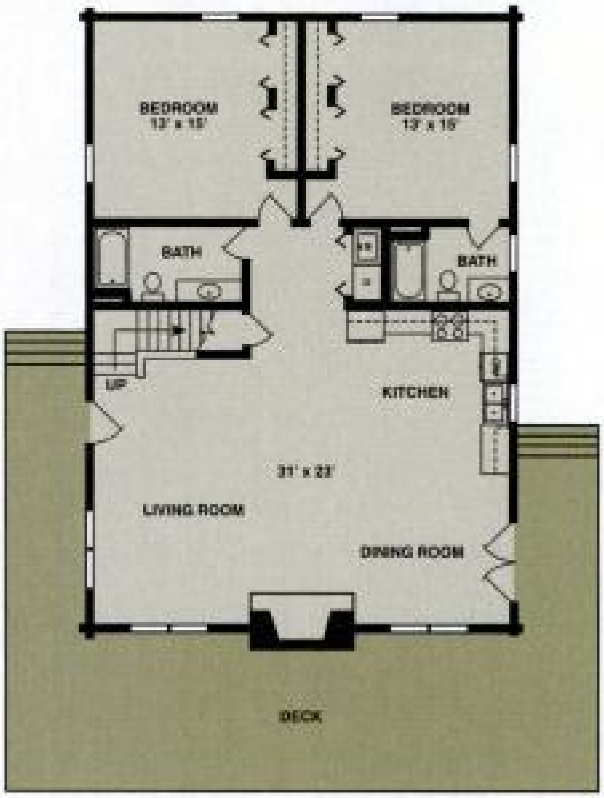
http://www.avaxhome.ws/blogs/Johnny77

SYLVA

First Floor: 1,472 sq. ft. Second Floor: 728 sq. ft.
Total Area: 2,200 sq. ft.
Catalog: $5 Blue Print: $125

A dream log home. Spacious living room. Large kitchen/dining area. Huge rock fireplace. Enough glass to view in all directions. A master bedroom any couple would die for. The Sylva has all the things you look for in a dream home. Three bedrooms, three baths, a loft area open to below. Imagine yourself out on the deck looking over your lake, preparing for your evening meal.

With over 65 years of log home expertise, we still do things the old-fashioned way: "Good quality at a fair price." Doing business in all 50 states has provided us with a proven track record that our products work well in all climates and terrain. Daniel Boone is a factory-direct distributor to the customer. This saves you money by eliminating the middle man. We strive to offer more log styles than our competitors to give each customer their dream home. All of our log packages are dried and independently inspected to the highest standards. They carry a lifetime warranty for the peace of mind that your log home can be passed on to the next generation.



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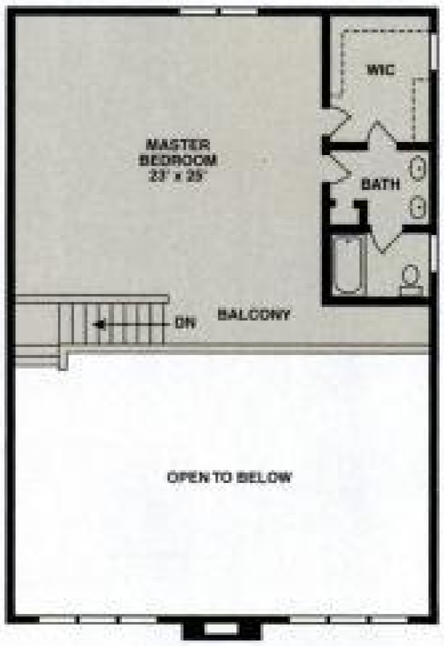

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Circle Reader Response #465

http://www.avaxhome.ws/blogs/Johnny77

CAMP UP NORTH

First Floor: 2,200 sq. ft. Second Floor: 1,800 sq. ft.
Porch: 600 sq. ft.
Total Area: 4,600 sq. ft.

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www.scandinavianlogandtimber.com

Circle Reader Response #381

This was a combined effort between Scandinavian Log & Timber Works and a team of excellent architects, stone masons and carpenters that resulted in a work of art to be enjoyed for generations to come.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

MCKAY

Total Area: 2,041 sq. ft.

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Circle Reader Response #394

The McKay features the popular open-concept great room with exposed 6'x8' timbers, optional first floor laundry, gabled sunroom, and large master bath with walk-in closet. The Deluxe shell package includes kiln-dried 8'x6' D logs for exterior walls, siding for sunroom, gables and dormers, exposed beams with tongue-and-groove material on all ceilings, loft and porch, nailbase insulation panels and fasteners, caulk and gasket. It does not include doors, windows, shingles or interior walls. For more information or to order our $10 portfolio with planning guide and set of affordable floor plans, call 800-368-1015 or 419-368-0004.

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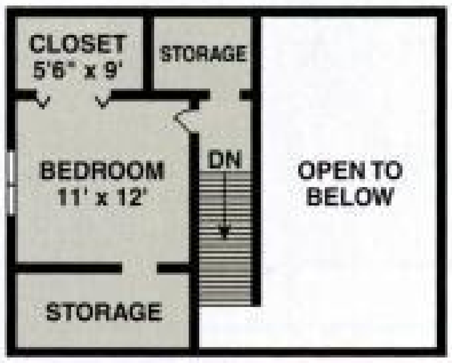
At just under 1,000 square feet, the Buck from Log Homes Of America offers a cozy, efficient floor plan that's perfect for that cabin in the woods you've always wanted. The generous covered porch offers a shady place to sit and look out over your property. Inside, the main floor's open design allows for optimum flow from the spacious living room/dining area to the kitchen.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

BUCK

First Floor: 616 sq. ft. Second Floor: 308 sq. ft.

Total Area: 924 sq. ft.

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Fax: 828-963-6782
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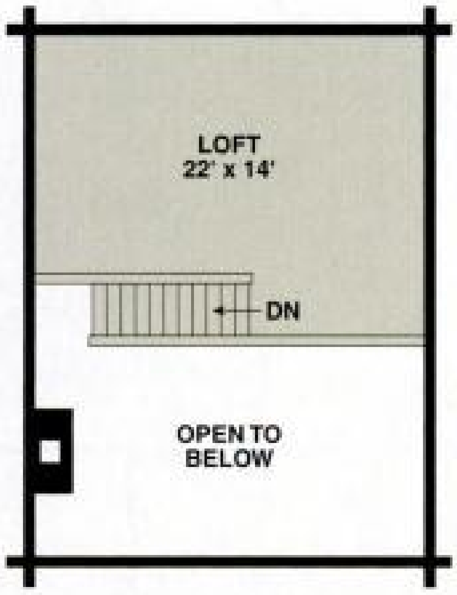
www.loghomesofamerica.com

Circle Reader Response #238

For a cozy cabin getaway or an attractive rental unit for your campground or resort, Meadow Valley's Park Villa fits the bill. While utilizing a compact and efficient design, the Villa still offers all the comforts of home featuring an open great room, kitchen, bath, two bedrooms and an open loft. These cabins are built using our economical 5x8 log timbers, creating an attractive rustic look and feel inside and out.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

THE VILLA

First Floor: 768 sq. ft. Second Floor: 308 sq. ft.

Total Area: 1,076 sq. ft.

Call for pricing

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Circle Reader Response #192

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At Expedition Log Homes, our experienced team knows what distinguishes a memorable log home ... like hand-picked, kiln-dried pine or cedar, cut only from the heart of the log, and skillfully crafted by hand with a drawknife. The Eagle's Nest brings the grandeur of the outdoors into the quiet elegance of a log home. Featuring spacious gathering areas and ample bedrooms, this floor plan is perfect for active families.

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

EAGLE'S NEST

Total Area: 3,186 sq. ft.

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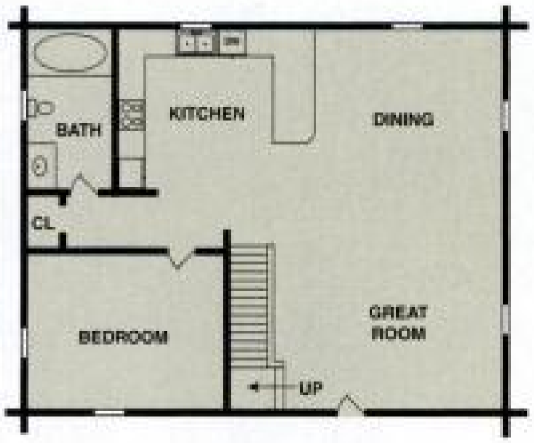
www.expeditionloghomes.com

Circle Reader Response #390

The Glacier is a two- to three-bedroom home with an open floor plan. The kitchen flows into the dining and great rooms to create a spacious feel. With a vaulted roofline in the great room, you'll get the sense of a much larger home at a very reasonable cost.



FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

THE GLACIER

Total Area: 1,437 sq. ft.

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Circle Reader Response #119

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THE MOHICAN

Total Area: 1,692 sq. ft.
$45,426

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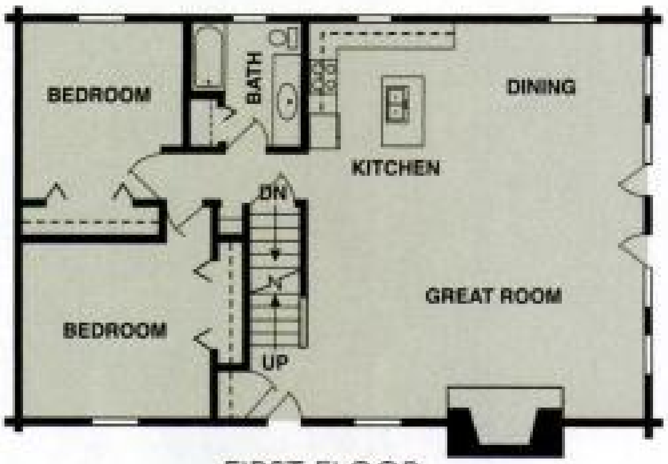

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

WIND RIDGE

First Floor: 768 sq. ft. Second Floor: 455 sq. ft.
Total Area: 1,223 sq. ft.

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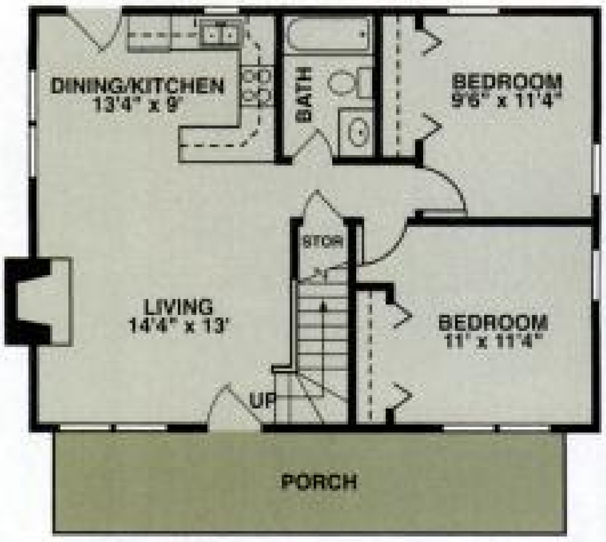
Circle Reader Response #43

Wind Ridge is a handsome home designed to make living in it a pleasure. On the ground floor, a stone fireplace graces the living room which opens up into the kitchen/dining area. Upstairs, the loft overlooking the kitchen complements the open design of the cathedral ceiling over the living room/dining area. The master bedroom features a generous walk-in closet and full bath.



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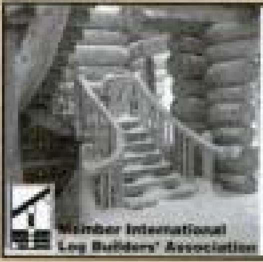

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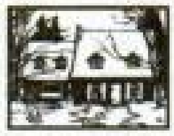

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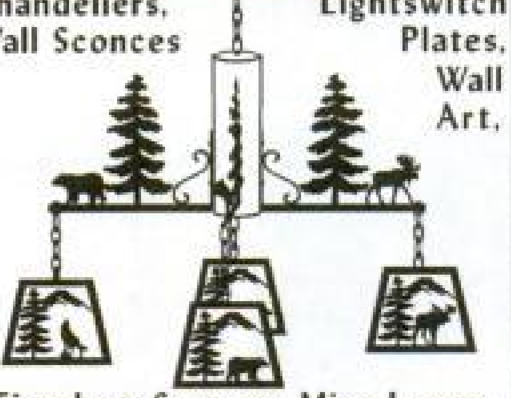

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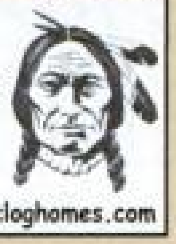

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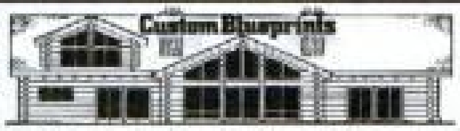

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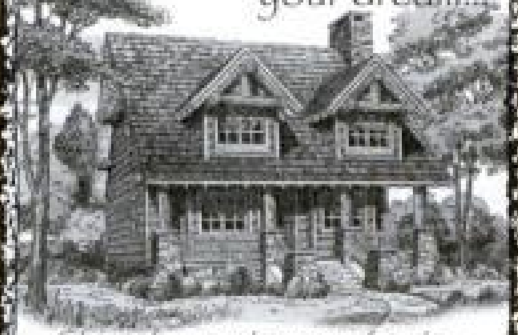

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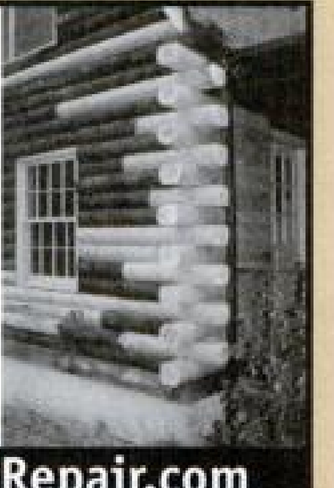

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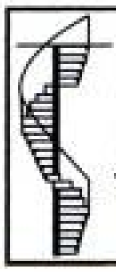
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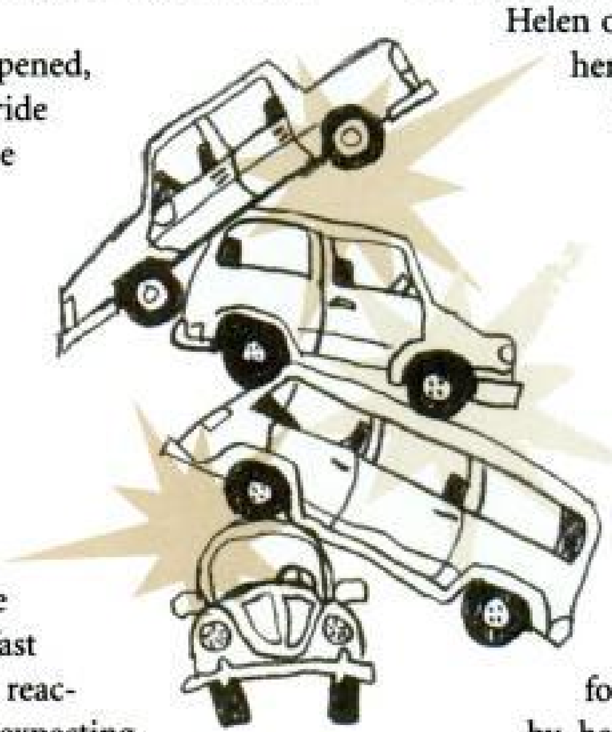
Everybody's Got A Story

I was at an informal gathering in a friend's backyard when the conversation inevitably turned to cars. Everyone had at least one car story that we laughed uproariously about, knowing full well it took many years to arrive at that amused reaction.

Mark started the ball rolling with this story. His father had a sporty '62 Corvette Mark was never allowed to touch, let alone drive. "I had to drive my mother's old station wagon," Mark explained. "Can you imagine what a blow that was for a young guy?"

You can probably guess what happened, right? One night his friend needed a ride home, and because his father was gone for the evening, Mark risked taking the Corvette. As luck would have it, he turned too sharply — way, way too sharply — backing out of the driveway and a utility pole did some serious damage to the passenger side door panel. He quickly returned the car to its privileged place in the garage and never mentioned the accident to his father. The next morning, Mark sat at the breakfast table, shaking in terror at his father's reaction when he saw the dent and fully expecting his father to come thundering back into the house. But nothing happened.



That evening, however, his father did come thundering into the house. "Do you know what happened to my car?!" he screamed. Mark opened his mouth to 'fess up, but before he could utter a word, his dad yelled, "Some idiot sideswiped me in the parking lot today!" Mark never told a soul what he had done until after his father's funeral when all the kids were gathered around swapping stories.

I chimed in with a story that still makes me feel a twinge of shame. When I was a young teen, my family lived in a very small community in Alaska, a village without a police officer. I guess that's why my parents let me drive their big Chrysler Imperial the few blocks to the general store even though I didn't have a license. Well, I drove farther and faster than I should have and ended up skidding into a ditch where a branch torpedoed through the fancy grillwork. I gathered all the little chrome grill pieces up, drove home and tossed them in front of the car, placing a hammer next to them. My brothers got the blame for the damage. By the way, I've never told them the real story, so guys, if you read this column, I apologize.

Karen told the story of how her son and several friends were driving back from a ski trip and found themselves a hundred miles from home, nearly out of gas and without a nickel in their collective pockets. Fortunately, the kid did, however, have his AAA card with a towing feature, so he reached under the dash, disconnected several wires and called for help. The tow truck pulled the car home, her son reconnected the wires and the problem was solved.

"Tell your out-of-control car story," Lenny urged Helen. Helen obliged, relating how she arrived early on her first day on her job as an administrator for a non-profit and locked her keys in the car. That particular car had a small window panel that was not locked, so she reached in, stretching to grab the keys dangling in the ignition. Somehow in the process, the car got knocked into gear and started rolling backward. Frantic, she hopped along beside the vehicle, steering the car as best she could. She successfully rammed it up against a curb and it stopped rolling.

"But not before I rolled over my own foot," she explained. All of this was witnessed by her arriving employees, who administered first aid. "It took a while for them to take me seriously after that introduction," she added.

"No, Helen, that's not the story I meant!" Lenny said. "But that's a good one."

"You must mean," she said, "the time I ran a red light, got hit by a car and crashed first into the signal light pole and then into the corner of the newspaper building. Wow, there were photographers and reporters everywhere, plus the mayor just happened to be walking past. I didn't mind having my picture in the paper, but the headline included my age, as if that had something to do with the bizarre accident."

"Nope, that's not the story I meant either," Lenny said. "Tell the van story."

"Oh, THAT story," Helen. said. "Well that one really wasn't my fault. While I was shopping in the mall, my car somehow slipped out of gear and rolled all the way across the huge lot into a van. Wouldn't you know that it was a vintage van, complete with shag carpet? And the guy wanted me arrested for damaging his property."

The night rolled on, one story flowing into another, all about cars. If the mosquitoes hadn't attacked, we'd probably be there still, spinning stories about cars that are funny — now.

Lee Bock, rural Wisconsin essayist, shares her observations and reflections in each issue of *Log Home Design Ideas*.

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